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IDEAS AND REALITIES.

IDEAS

REALITIES

STUDY OF LARGER SERIES

IDEAS AND REALITIES

DR. WILLIAM DAWBY, D.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TABLE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILL., 1911

1911

IDEAS

AND

REALITIES;

596
762

OR

THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY WILLIAM DANBY, Esq.

OF SWINTON PARK, YORKSHIRE.

EXETER:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY E. WOOLMER, GAZETTE-OFFICE;
AND SOLD BY MESSRS. RIVINGTON, WATERLOO-PLACE, LON-
DON; MESSRS. TODD, YORK; C. UPHAM, EXETER; AND ALL
OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1827.

IDEAS

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REALITIES

EXPERIMENTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

BY WILLIAM DUNN, Esq.

1867

PREFACE.

INDUCED, as I hope, though perhaps not solely, by the desire of doing some good, I venture another publication into the world, without prefixing any dedication to it, because if its own merits are sufficient to recommend it, any other assistance will be superfluous; if they are not, it will be unavailing. Perhaps the favorable mention that has been made of my former work, particularly in the *Monthly Review*, and *Gentleman's Magazine*, might be some inducement to follow the example of Swift, in dedicating this to Prince Posterity, who however will judge for himself, without being courted by a dedication, as also will the reigning Prince, the Opinion of the present

time, which I will not shew my distrust of, by an appeal to any other; and if the "*ætas præsens*" is not capable or willing to do justice, there is still less to be expected from a "*progenies vitiosior*," which however I hope will not follow it. My confidence in either must depend on my perhaps too partial opinion of my own performance.

As to the rest, the reader will find but little insertion from (though some occasional allusions to) my former work, and none from the "*Remarks on Lacon*," who however I think affords what is worthy of remark, for which I must refer those who agree with me, and who think it worth the trouble of a search, to what I have written before; if they peruse it, they will perhaps find that the probably hastily formed opinion of the Editor of the Gentleman's Magazine, that my remarks on Lacon were "*trite and puerile*," was not altogether just; that he has not fairly estimated the "*ridendo dicere*"—— what he pleases.

My present work I must leave to its fate, satisfied, whatever that may be, and however trifling its claims to attention, that there is nothing in it which I wish to recal, “Nihil, quod indictum volo.” Whether I have been too partial to myself in the indulgence of this feeling, I must leave to be judged of by the reader, whose censure I had better submit to (as indeed I must) than supplicate his candor for any sentiments or ideas that may have been ill digested or hastily adopted and expressed. * The “bona,” “mediocria,” and “mala” (if there are all these descriptions) may I think be offered to the public in one common lot,

* I fear, on revision, that this may have been the case, that in retaining the suggestion of the moment, I have sometimes wanted a “Cynthia, aurem vellere et admonere”—that there are “Plura quidem tollenda relinquendis.”—Be this as it may, I must now leave it to the judgment of the reader. He will, it is to be hoped, distinguish the “tollenda” from the *consideranda*.

without the eloquence of the rostrum, or the elevation of the hammer, to urge their reception, which will probably be such as they are found to deserve. They are meant to excite as well as to express thought ; and as I have supposed my readers capable of that (leisure they must find themselves) I cannot help flattering myself that there will be some among them whose sympathy and approbation I may reckon upon, and may have reason to be proud of.

Exeter, May, 1827.

THOUGHTS, &c.



I.

I HAVE heard it objected to books of this kind, that they are of too desultory a nature, as being composed of detached facts and ideas, in which a sudden transition must be made from one to another; but is not all philosophical knowledge the result of the observation of detached facts? and is not the general connexion between them (for all must be more or less connected) the result of still further observation and reflection? What can be more desultory than the facts that occur to our daily observation? And all reasoning from which a general conclusion is drawn, must be supported by particular facts and arguments, and which must be examined and compared. The dwelling on and confining ourselves too much to any particular subjects of reflection, may have the ill effect of leading us into mistaken notions and habits, more or less injurious to our opinions and interests. Acting inconsiderately may be the result of too partial consideration.



II.

IF we admit, as we cannot but do, the existence of a Supreme Being, we must be sensible that it far

exceeds our utmost power to form any conception of his nature (*quasi natus*, mark how inadequate these terms are;) but we may have some notion of his attributes, both from the ideas we can form of the qualities that are required to constitute a being of infinite perfection, as wisdom, justice, goodness, power, &c. and from what he says of himself in the Sacred Writings; but to judge in any manner of these, as forming the character (if that word may be used) of such a Being, must require a very great exertion of our mental powers, and an equal attention to the use we make of them. I say this, as in considering the Being we are here speaking of, we are naturally apt to fix our attention upon what most immediately strikes us, which is, his power; we see and feel the strongest proofs of that in his works, in the revolutions that take place in the celestial bodies, in the events and changes of the moral world, &c.; and we are the more sensible of the vastness of this power, from the comparison we make of it with our own weakness and dependance. In considering this attribute, we are too apt to overlook the others (partly, perhaps, as not being so immediately obvious) or not to give them their due estimation, or to allow to each its proper influence. Thus, as considering God as all-powerful, we do not at the same time consider that the exercise of that power must be regulated by his wisdom and his justice, for the latter are as traceable in his works as they are inseparable from his nature; and if his mercy makes a part (which no doubt it does) of that infinite goodness which we are authorised to consider as belonging to his nature, it must only operate as "tempering his justice," not as infringing

upon it; if it did the latter, one attribute would be destroyed by the other; for as Young says,

“A God all mercy is a God unjust.”

Each of his attributes must therefore have its proper sway and influence; without these, his nature would not be displayed, nor his works have their proper character, as being those “of his hands;” and his attributes must be exercised, in the moral world, in “directing, governing, and sanctifying the hearts and bodies” of us, his rational creatures (as far as the freedom of agency he has given us will allow of that direction, and, as far as the use we make of that freedom will deserve, or rather not have forfeited it) “in the ways of his laws, and in the works of his commandments.”



III.

DR. JOHNSON’S reply to a friend, who said that there surely were proofs sufficient of the soul’s immortality, that “he wished for still more,” was, I think, itself an additional proof of it; for what thinking and feeling mind does not wish for more? And if we refer (as we must) all the effects to one Supreme Cause, we must consider this wish (our disposition to entertain it) as being given us from thence; and surely—surely—it was not given us in vain.

No, no. “Thereafter as a man feareth,” so will it also be *as he hopeth*; provided those hopes have their proper accompaniments here. I believe I have urged this argument before; but every shape in which it presents itself, gives it a new force. Does not this unsatisfied wish make part of the “fear and trembling” with which we are to “work out our salvation?”



IV.

THE only means by which we can judge of men's characters, is by the consistency of their actions and general conduct; and this is at best an imperfect and fallible means; for the want of consistency may often proceed from other and less blameable motives (as want of discretion, &c.) than the insincerity, and perhaps selfishness and hypocrisy, to which we are apt to attribute it. Indeed all worldly judgments must be imperfect, as they are suggested, in some degree at least, by worldly feelings; besides that we have not the powers given us that are requisite to enable us to form them, to the degree of perfection that our way of pronouncing them seems to imply the assumption of. This, too, shews itself in the expressions we use (for language must keep pace with intelligence.) What is the full and precise meaning of insincerity? To give us an idea both of the inconsistency that shews itself in the characters of others, and in some measure to dispose us to be lenient in the judgment we form of it, we need only to attend to the manner in which it shews itself in ourselves.

Decisiveness often finds its support in want of liberality and candour.



V.

THERE is a force in Young's Night Thoughts that no other author has equalled; and well there may, for no other subject admits of such a force as that which he has written upon.



VI.

THERE are things in the Sacred Writings which are above the reach of our comprehension; but there are none which are above the reach of our feelings; and if our reason is unable to judge of the things (mysterious as they are) themselves, it is very well able to ascertain the justness of those feelings which are excited by them.



VII.

THE great design of the Christian religion appears to be, and no doubt is, to impress us with that awe and reverence, that "fear and trembling," that dependence upon the mercies of our Maker, and the meditation of our Redeemer, which is most suited to the sense that we ought to, and cannot but have, when we reflect seriously on the weakness, the many imperfections, and the proneness to evil, of our nature.



VIII.

How watchful ought we to be over the humour of the moment! How cautious against the indulgence of habits that may lead us into actions which are in opposition to our better judgments, and which on reflection may draw upon us all the bitterness of self-reproach! and how small a deviation from propriety is sufficient to do this! What opportunities may we

have lost, and how faint may be our hopes either of regaining them, or of atoning for their loss! In condemning ourselves, how do we increase the pain of that, by adding to it the condemnation, or at least the blame, that may be cast upon us by others! What refuge shall we find from all this? Instead of finding any, we may only have to say to ourselves,

“Video meliora, proboque,
“Deteriora sequor.”

The only alleviation of our mental sufferings may be in recording them.

How comprehensive is Horace's

“Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa!”

—o—

IX.

THE having overcome great defects in ourselves makes us more sensible of the pain which lesser ones that still remain give us; but the conquest that we have already made over ourselves, both induces us to attempt others, and assists us in making them.

Tranquillity does not consist in abstinence from efforts, but is the result of, and the reward for, having made them.

—o—

X.

THE knowledge of ourselves is the more difficult to obtain, as, though our line of conduct may be uniform, the state of our minds is continually changing, unless when it is influenced by some predominant propensity,

and as far as regards that influence. As to the rest, the general conclusion, that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made," is perhaps all that we can arrive at.

—o—

XI.

IT unfortunately often happens, in this world, that those whose dispositions and manners are the most calculated to conciliate the friendship of others, are the least disposed to be friends to themselves. They pay no attention to Juvenal's maxim,

"Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia."

—o—

XII.

THE events of to-day make us look forward to what will happen to-morrow; those of yesterday carry our views into another world.*

—o—

XIII.

IN writing, especially on interesting subjects, ("quæ magis ad nos") we should endeavour to be both understood and felt.

—o—

XIV.

WHAT a consolation would the Christian lose, if he regarded the Almighty in the light which the Deist does!

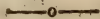
* As exciting reflection, which perhaps does not immediately occur; our pillows will suggest it.

It is the former who is taught and encouraged to consider and address him as "Our Father," &c. The Deist may do the same, but then in his heart he is not a Christian. His heart "gives the sceptre in his head the lie."

Lucretius says,

"Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor :"

Thereby excluding all other motives; as if, in such a case, the human Mind, complicated as it is, could be swayed by only one.



XV.

What has naturally the most powerful effect upon our minds, is the sense of present happiness. If our enjoyment of that is free from all blame, there can be no occasion for any thing to counteract it; but if our pursuit of it (as is the case with us mortals) sometimes leads us into a wrong course of conduct, some other sense is required to deter us from this, or bring us again from it, into a right course; and this can only be done by our fears of the consequences that may follow our transgressions, in this or another world. As to our hopes of futurity, they must arise from some degree, greater or less, of dissatisfaction with our present state, and therefore must imply an imperfection in the sense of happiness first mentioned, if not an opposite sense of misery. To create this imperfection, the sense of the short and precarious duration of our happiness here, however great it may be at the present moment, is of itself sufficient. Constituted, therefore, as we are in our present state, our fears and hopes are equally necessary to us; the first, to make us look forward

to a compensation for what we suffer, or what is wanting to us here; the second, to deter us from the abuse of the means of present enjoyment that are given to us.

—o—

XVI.

IT may sometimes be easier to reason against the fear of death, than to reason ourselves out of it. Nay, the very exertion of the reasoning faculties may, from the impossibility of coming to an absolutely certain conclusion, increase that fear; as seems to have been the case with Dr. Johnson.*

—o—

XVII.

OF a man who expresses a doubt of the immortality of the soul, and the retribution of a future life, this question may be asked: What do you mean to limit? the power, the wisdom, the justice, or the goodness of God? These indeed are arguments which we may be diffident in urging, from our fear of applying them to ourselves; for to which of the above attributes can we refer with confidence, in support of our own hopes of salvation? If to any, it must be the last.

—o—

XVIII.

WHAT appears to us to be most amiable (perhaps even estimable) in the sight of man, may not always be

* See Article II.

really so; for without adopting the dogma of "shining sins," we may suppose a tinsel in some virtues, that has more lustre than solidity; they may want the *assay* of religion.



XIX.

How many persons are there, whose command over themselves goes no further than the regulation of their manners and address—their "outward and visible signs!" This, however, will pass current in society, and as far as it goes is a ground of *confidence*.



XX.

WE should censure, without being *ensorious*.



XXI.

"*FESTINA lente*" is not only the way to do business, but also to enjoy pleasure. It should, however, be worth the *dwelling* upon, and should leave no *sting* behind it.



XXII.

"*LACK* of matter" is often supplied by *manner*; as it is (as Rosalind says in "*As you like it*") by "kissing." Indeed it may sometimes be of less consequence *what* we express, than *how* we express it. So much de-

pend upon manner and gesture, that one half of the intercourse of society may be said (excuse the bull reader) to be *pantò-mimic*.



XXIII.

THE consciousness of what they deserve may sometimes make men take more offence at the reception they meet with from others than was meant to be given.



XXIV.

Is it not a proof of the extent of power in the human mind, that it can state a difficulty that it cannot resolve? Does not this imply a sort of imperfect comprehension?



XXV.

AFTER all, how far does our power of judging extend? There are many cases in which reason (that highest faculty in man) may be staggered. How far is reason a match for scepticism? What is its influence over opinion? What, in short, would it do, if *feeling* were not called to its aid?



XXVI.

THERE is no crime in thought, say some. What then is it that constitutes, or at least aggravates, the

crime of wilful and *deliberate* murder? What, but thought? And if that is a crime when carried to such an extent, is there nothing wrong in its first deviations from rectitude? Thought is of such importance in the eye of the law, that nothing but the absolute derangement of the power of thinking (in insanity) is allowed as an excuse for crime.



XXVII.

OUR first thoughts we cannot govern, that is, so as to prevent their intrusion: but we can correct them by our *second* thoughts; and these, perhaps, when well reflected on, should govern *us*.



XXVIII.

“WERE but the beautiful lineaments of the Christian character to be pourtrayed in a theory which should disclaim all interference with the consciences and duties of the world, it would infallibly attract much intellectual and setimental admiration.”—(*Erskine's Remarks on the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion*, p. 85.)

True; for it would then be considered only as a theory, an ideal representation. We should then exclaim (without being called upon to consult our happiness in following it—as indeed we do now) O, if it could be realized in practice! That it cannot, is no doubt owing chiefly to the influence of our passions, which are continually in collision with each other, and with our reason. It may indeed be observed, that much of the excellence of the Christian

doctrines is founded on the supposition (or rather reality) of the existence of moral evil; for to obey the commandment of "loving our enemies," we must have enemies: to "pray for them that persecute us," we must have persecutors: to "return good for evil," we must suffer evil, &c. If, all men "did as they would that others should do unto them," which is perhaps the most comprehensive of all the moral precepts of the gospel, this would preclude the existence of moral evil; but it would at the same time preclude all choice between good and evil, because the latter would no longer exist: we can judge of and estimate good, only by comparing and contrasting it with evil.



XXIX.

WHAT is of the greatest importance to us, is certainly the most worthy of our attention. Religion should therefore hold the first place; moral philosophy the next; and history, which exhibits examples of the pursuit or neglect of the two first, and of the wisdom or folly of mankind, should surely be preferred to works of mere invention, as novels, which, though they may contain examples and lessons of morality, are generally more read for the amusement and interest, than for the instruction they afford, and are not likely to have any very beneficial or solid effects upon our minds, our lives, or our conversation; however the fashion of the day may require the latter to be imbued with them. One would think that the great difficulty in writing novels lay in *selection*, as there are all the possible scenes of human life to choose out of. To found novels upon historical facts may

be to mix the "utile dulci;" but does it not interfere with the essential quality of history, *Truth*?

—o—

XXX.

THERE is a self-sufficiency by which *self* alone is satisfied; as indeed is implied in its name.

—o—

XXXI.

How often may generosity be repelled by the terms on which it is asked!

—o—

XXXII.

THERE is a false pride as well as a false courage, and a false shame. The two last, perhaps, are founded on the first.

—o—

XXXIII.

WHAT makes men honest, and what keeps them so? —The solicitude to do what is right, and the fear of doing wrong. This too will make us cautious of imputing to others that blame which we ought to take to ourselves.

—o—

XXXIV.

To have been "faithful over a few things," is an approbation which perhaps there are not many who

can expect; for it must have been the fidelity of a *watchman*; and who is there that has never slept on his post?



XXXV.

THERE is a propensity in our minds to self-conceit, which makes us unwilling to adopt any opinion that is at all at variance with our preconceived notions; however it may be confirmed by the fair examination of our reason. Thus, the mysterious doctrines of Christianity appear to Mr. Belsham to be a corruption of its simplicity. He would make a code of his own, that might have many admirers, but probably very few followers.



XXXVI.

LET our prospects or retrospects be what they may, one of the best consolations in this life is, that we can say, All is well, at the present moment. To have that to say, must at least give a momentary exhilaration. This, however, supposes that we can look forward with hope, and backward without regret.



XXXVII.

A MAN of right feelings is never more disposed to be thankful to his Maker, than when he is in good health and spirits, and contented with himself.



XXXVIII.

FROM the existence of God, to his providential agency over the affairs of men, there is a chain of reasoning, the limits of which are inseparable.



XXXIX.

THE great wish of the human mind is permanency; permanency in a state of quiet, and of happiness: we are in continual pursuit of it here; but the attainment of it is reserved for another life.



XL.

EITHER reward must be considered as the fulfilment of desire, or else human desires, however founded in reason, must be regarded as impossible to be fulfilled, and as given to excite hopes that are never to be realised.

May we not trust to our feelings for the encouragement of those hopes of happiness to which the mind aspires? Surely we may, if our consciences do not convict us of an absolute inconsistency with these feelings in our conduct.

There is a place of repose—it is the grave: there is a place of happiness—it is in heaven. Can we doubt that those who wish for both, and whose conduct has been as much influenced as their minds have been occupied by that wish, shall enjoy the fulfilment of it?

 XLI.

MEN who are obstinate and dogmatical in opinion, must consider themselves as being dispensed from the obligation of "living to learn;" indeed they seem to go farther, and to consider themselves as *living to teach*."

XLII.

" ——— BETWEEN th' extremes to move,
 "Of mad good nature, or of mean self-love."

WHERE is the medium between these to be found? In consulting our own judgments, or in following the examples of others? If the latter, we have still a *selection* to make. Are men oftener the dupes of their confidence in others, or in themselves?

XLIII.

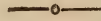
OUR great business, morally and religiously speaking, here on earth, is, not the attainment of perfection, but the doing away of imperfection, of the faults that create it: it cannot be said that these are the same thing; for a state of progress is not a state of attainment.

XLIV.

" NULLUM numen abest, si sit prudentia."

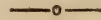
IF we give the most extended sense to "prudence,"

how many occasions may it afford for self-reproach, in a retrospect of our past lives, perhaps to much better and more prudent men than myself! Shall I lighten my sense of this, by sharing it with them? Still much of it will remain, and it ought to remain. But let me reserve the *detail* for my own *confessional*, and my own regrets.



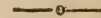
XLV.

WE may go on improving in abilities and in virtues, but one mischief (and that no small one) is, that our vanity is apt to keep pace with our own improvement, which it retards the progress of, by continually looking behind; εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω.



XLVI.

GIVE the mind food, or it will prey on itself. Is this from an analogy between our physical and moral constitutions? Let not the materialist infer too much from this. The germ must have something to put it in action; but its own inherent powers will keep it so. A man must feel his own capabilities; but from whence proceeds capability itself? Whence, but from the First Cause of all?



XLVII.

IT is not merely by publishing moral reflections that mankind are to be informed or improved; for surely a little exertion of common sense is very equal to the

making of them; but it is by the lights in which they are placed, and the manner in which they are expressed :

“Delectando, pariterque monendo.”

But take care, author, how you provoke criticism.

XLVIII.

THERE is one kind of measurement, which is among the most interesting for us to take, and perhaps the most difficult in taking; and that is, the sphere of another man's capacity.

XLIX.

NATURE seems, in the animal kingdom particularly, to have made some things to be admired (all, indeed, if considered in one point of view) some to be feared, and some to be laughed at.

L.

WE are generally more disposed to inquire into what we are to practice than what we are to believe; and it seems fit that it should be so; for what we are to practice is more within the reach of our comprehension, than what we are to believe; and practical Christianity of more importance than speculative. The importance of the latter depends in a good measure upon the influence it has upon the former; as being

the condition upon which the divine assistance is given us in the regulation of our conduct.

—o—

LI.

THE descriptions given by the poets, of the ancient and primitive simplicity of mankind, the golden age, &c. prove, I believe, more the idea that we have of what men ought to be, than that that idea was ever realised; that there ever was a time

“When service sweat for duty, not for meed.”

(*Shakspeare's As you like it.*)

—o—

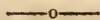
LII.

IF it is not exactly true, as has been said, that “words are things,” we must at least allow that *things* depend a good deal upon their expression in *words*; as may be instanced in the “curiosa felicitas” of Horace; which indeed we must allow sometimes shews itself “parum pudicè.”

If we attend to what passes in our own minds, we shall find that we may have an idea of things without being able to express them in words; but then the idea is perhaps itself imperfect. Thus it seems that intelligence and expression go hand in hand together. One would think, however, that we may know a “hawk from a hernshaw,” (or “handsaw,”* if Shake-

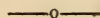
* I do not know whether the reading of “handsaw” may not, like Shakspeare's other “anomalies,” be defended against those who, like Warburton (see Edwards's “Canons of Criticism.”) would have him “speak

speare and my reader please,) or "a sheep's head from a carrot," without being able to give them their proper names; but there must be some power of description.



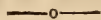
LIII.

WOULD it be a new question in Ethics, how far the *love of fun* may be carried, without offence or injury to morality? A "figure of fun" (I mean a rhetorical one) may be useful, if set in a proper direction (well placed and timed.) Wilful or blundering perversion may be shamed into intelligence, by those who have it, and will use it properly.



LIV.

WE are never more inclined to be in good humour with others, than when they put us in good humour with ourselves.



LV.

TOUCH a string in the human mind, and all the corresponding strings will vibrate; such is the extent of analogy, of harmony, and of general connexion.

by the card." In this case, too, the stronger the dissimilitude, the more powerful is the representation. An approach to nonsense may have its effect, as a reply to an argument which deserves no better. If a man will not, or cannot, see farther than his *nose*, what object shall we set before him? It must be a broad one, certainly.

 LVI.

WE are apt to be jealous of the liberties that others take with us, in porportion to our idea of their power of abusing them; for is it not the sense of power that influences the will? And when those liberties are carried beyond the bounds of custom, we have no rule to calculate by.

LVII.

“VOX audita perit; litera scripta manet.”

YES; but the “vox audita” more immediately excites attention, and calls for reply: it provokes it, as being a personal address.

LVIII.

“OPINION is beginning to establish a country* of its own,” says the *Morning Chronicle* of May 15, 1823.

Opinion, in some shape and degree or other, has always governed mankind. It is therefore *of all countries*. In our times, it is more free, and perhaps more enlightened and influential. But what is opinion, and how is itself influenced?

LIX.

If we consider how much in this world must be matter of opinion, we need not wonder that opinions should

* By a “country of opinion” perhaps the M. C. means an *imaginary country*.

differ so widely from each other. Truth, however, must be somewhere, (though we sometimes make our ignorance a plea for doubting it) and we have at least *probability* to guide us to it.



LX.

IN nature there is much to admire, much to investigate, much to know, and much more to remain ignorant of. The sense of that ignorance is perhaps the highest knowledge we can have.

If matter is infinitely divisible (as it is said to be) the smallest conceivable body must be an aggregate of parts.



LXI.

THAT our reason and feelings are so often at variance makes a part, and no small one, of our probation.



LXII.

A PIOUS mind (and what rational being can be without such?) must necessarily look forward to other objects and enjoyments than this world can afford, to excite its piety. Reflection increases this sentiment, but gives no encouragement or sanction to the mere desire of prolonging our existence here, except it is to perform our duties in it.

LXIII.

WHATEVER question is proposed, and of whatever nature it is, and the more in proportion to its seriousness, importance, and intricacy, ought to be fairly, candidly, and reasonably examined.

LXIV.

KNOWING as we do, if we know any thing at all of human nature, the propensity that men have to form conclusions from partial reasoning, we ought to distrust, or at least to listen with great caution to, any opinions that are advanced by individuals even of great apparent ability, if those opinions are dogmatically pronounced, and if they relate to difficult and complicated cases, and are at variance with the general opinion of the world, from which those individuals, in the pride of their self conceit, may exult in differing. In such a light, I should regard the *dictum* of a certain Jewish Rabbi, quoted, I think (and perhaps with complaisance) by Dr. Geddes, "that Moses was a cunning fellow." Is this, with all its bearings, consistent with a fair and complete examination of all that the Bible contains? And is it from the mouth of a Jew (all Rabbi as he is) that we are to take our notions of a book, of which the Christian system forms an essential and inseparable part? To say with the Jew Rabbi, "that Moses was a very cunning fellow," would be to suppose an alliance between truth and falsehood (in one being made by Moses an instrument to establish the other) that would be totally incom-

patible with all the ideas we can form of the sanctity of truth, and of the source from whence it must proceed.



LXV.

SOME parts of the Scriptures seem to be meant to humiliate us by a representation of human imperfections, as in the supplanting of Esau by Jacob, &c. ; and at the same time they preclude us from censuring them, by their connexion with the rest of the Bible.



LXVI.

THE Bible stands alone, but it stands on its own supports: to know the strength of these, it should be fairly and carefully examined. What collateral vouchers can we reasonably expect for such facts as the prophecies of Balaam, the narratives concerning Elijah, &c. and even for that of the deliverance of Daniel in the lions' den ; of Shadrac, Meshac, and Abednego in the fiery furnace ; of the hand-writing on the wall seen by Belshazzar, followed immediately after by the destruction of Babylon, &c.

The great leading facts in some of these, are indeed mentioned by other historians, as the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, &c. ; but to suppose the relative details of the Bible to be built upon these, would indeed be a bold and unauthorised assumption. If they were, they would not surely have been related in the manner they are.

The authority of the Sacred Writings is contained

chiefly within itself, as being a connected chain, whose links support and strengthen each other, so that none can be taken away without the destruction of all the rest; a consequence that, in a body of history of such magnitude and continuance, and whose parts are so connected with each other, would shake the foundations of all reasonable credibility.

—o—

LXVII.

THE sense of our ignorance will make us desirous of receiving information from others, and ought also to make us cautious in receiving it, and no less cautious in forming opinions of our own.

—o—

LXVIII.

IF we are only capable of partial reasoning, we can only be capable of receiving partial information.

—o—

LXIX.

MEN are so apt to be jealous of and prepossessed against particular professions, that it creates in them an equal disregard for what belongs to all: for if they do not do justice in one case, how can they be expected to do it in others?

—o—

LXX.

THOSE who are sensible of the true enjoyments of

life, and have the sources of them in their own breasts, will know the value of being *cheaply pleased*.



LXXI.

THE etymology of the word *gentleman*, (a gentle man) is, I believe, indicative of the best quality, or rather assemblage of qualities, that forms the character; and as such it has been originally assigned to it.* In giving it its full extent, how nearly do we find it allied to the Christian!



LXXII.

IT is the motion of the features, much more than their form, that indicates the mind: should not this be considered by craniologists and physiognomists? Perhaps they will say that the form determines the motion.



LXXIII.

A CERTAIN degree of self-complacency may be necessary to render us sufficiently independent of the caprice or injustice of others; but we should take care that this does not grow into *self-sufficiency*: if it does, all *improvement* is at an end.

* The reader may, if he pleases, consider this as an etymology of my own: however, I think the “original assignment” is justly accounted for; for when could a real *gentleman* be other than *gentle*? And what *rank* in society may not this quality extend to?



LXXIV.

IF mercy were not extended to human vanities, what would our fate be?



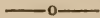
LXXV.

FAME may be "a bubble;" but what is it when well-earned?



LXXVI.

OUR reason cannot keep pace with our imagination or our feelings: but it can inform us when they are properly directed; and its sanction will give them the stamp of truth.



LXXVII.

THE stimulus that the human mind requires to excite it to the performance of its duties, must necessarily be greater than what its own sense of its powers of attainment (or at least its experience upon trial) can come up to; because the ultimate object held out as the reward of its endeavors (and it is endeavor that is required, and not perfect attainment) towards that performance, is infinitely beyond any thing that it has power to conceive; and nothing less would be sufficient to excite these endeavors; for the wishes of the human mind exceed all its powers of attainment.



LXXVIII.

IF other proofs were wanting of the great imperfection of human nature, would it not be a sufficient one, that the best claim an individual can have to the esteem of his fellow creatures, must be founded on his manifestation of that *reasonable humility*, that “outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace” which can only arise from a due sense of what he is, and must be, in the sight of his Creator; from the feeling which his conscience must impress him with, when he looks up to his *God*, or to that embodied excellence which shewed itself in the character of his *Saviour*? Any other merit that may be due to him as a member of society, must arise from a (relative) comparison between him and the rest of those who have “fallen short” (very short, indeed!) “of the Glory of God.” Well then may Young say,

“A Christian is the highest style of man.”*



LXXIX.

IF those hopes of futurity by which we are encouraged and enabled to support the trials and perform the duties of life, and by which alone our very existence is sometimes made tolerable to us; if those hopes are founded in delusion, then the wisdom, justice, and

* See, my good reader, this and the lines that follow it, in the fourth book of the *Night Thoughts*. They, I think, will make you feel as the Poet must have felt, when he wrote them.

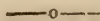
benevolence of God are evinced, and satisfied by the means of falsehood and imposition; and truth itself lends its sanction to a lie. But, as Young well says, "this cannot be."

The highest mental pleasures that we can enjoy here, only make us feel our capacity of enjoying still higher, unless this feeling is precluded by some impediment or other, great part of which probably originates in ourselves, and from our own *faults*. Though we did not "make ourselves," we very probably may have made *them*.



LXXX.

To mix vicious practices with religious observances, is to profane the very source of virtue, in confounding it with vice. Well therefore might St. Paul separate them so widely, in his address to the Corinthians.



LXXXI.

ALL human affairs are more or less mutable and precarious; it is easier for us, perhaps on that account, to see the tendency they have towards a change, than to see when or in what manner that change will be brought about. We can neither see with any clearness how causes may concur to produce certain effects, nor how they may counteract each other. Possibly very opposite effects may be produced to what we expected, and in a manner we cannot account for. Is not this evinced by the different accounts given by historians? Is not the same thing evinced in physical cases? What do we mean when we say (as is

done in both cases) that *matters*, or *diseases*, took such or such a turn?

All human reasoning must be more or less partial, and therefore can never thoroughly elucidate the subjects that it treats of, if they are at all complicated.

LXXXII.

WHAT is space, compared (if the comparison can be made) with infinity? Nothing, the philosopher will answer, even the greatest magnitude that can be conceived by our imaginations. Infinity, however, it should seem, must consist of space; and in our pursuit (if so it may be called) of the former, we can only go on increasing and multiplying, the greatest amount of which will admit of a comparison with the smallest from which we may have begun. But perhaps we can have no idea of space without assigning a limit to it. Infinity of space supposes an endless progression; space infinite supposes that progression completed,—suppositions which contradict each other. Does not this metaphysical reasoning put a negative upon any ideas that we can form?

LXXXIII.

ABSTRACT terms may be used: an abstract idea cannot be formed. But what is a term that expresses no idea?

LXXXIV.

WE throw ourselves into the arms of others, to seek that support which we might often find, and better find, in our-

selves. Independence on society, however, does not suppose exclusion from it; on the contrary, without that independence there can be no social enjoyment.



LXXXV.

A MAN may be allowed some separation from society, if he employs himself in what is likely to be of use to it : his inclination to do this (let Diogenes ascribe it to what motive he will) will not let him separate himself wholly from “his kind :” he will neither be “oblitus suorum,” nor “obliviscendus ab illis.”



LXXXVI.

ALL thought (that deserves the name) is association of ideas. Dwelling exclusively on one will make us too much neglect others. Even religion may be included in this; it must be associated with all that it regards; and what does it not regard?



LXXXVII.

How many habits and opinions do we begin with from impulse, and persevere in from indolence! As “idleness is the root of all evil,” so indolence is the bar to all improvement.*

* The “strenua inertia” supposes a progress, but not towards an improvement. All however must be mixed. Where is the “sincerum vas.”

Habit governs our inclinations, habit confirms them. By dwelling on one thing, our attachment to it is increased, and it is recommended to us by appearing in a new and more striking light. Thus we become better or worse, by persevering in the course we have entered upon.

—o—

LXXXVIII.

THAT we are “unprofitable servants” levels all distinctions, except those of *endeavours*.

—o—

LXXXIX.

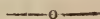
IT should seem that the disposition that men have to differ in opinion from each other (and not unfrequently from the prevailing one of the country they live in) especially on the most difficult and important subjects, makes their rulers, glad to avail themselves of any band that will keep them together, and gives rise in part (mixed perhaps with other causes) to the fear of making any innovations which might stir up the spirit of discord, and might be carried still farther by those who are always the most active, and generally the most mischievous members of society.

—o—

XC.

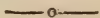
MEN of high notions in politics will not leave Providence to take its own course in human affairs ; not satis-

fied with any subordinate agency, they will take the "sceptre and the rod" into their own hands, an attempt of which they are generally the victims.



XCI.

THE measure of *faith* must probably be filled up by other means than what our comprehension supplies us with : different minds require different degrees of information. The *heart*, too, must concur with the *head* ; and both must be right.



XCII.

MADAME DE STAEL'S reasoning upon the "passion of love," seems to suppose that it may exist in such a degree between two human beings, as to produce a happiness that will not only anticipate, but even preclude the happiness of another life. Where is this "parfait sentiment" to be found ? If any where, it must be what Young speaks of,—

"Heaven given above for heaven enjoyed below:"

Of which Madame de Stael's happiness seems to be the reverse, as being "given below" for (i. e. instead of) that to be "enjoyed above." Madame de Stael and Young certainly allude to different feelings, which indeed *she* confounds in supposing a parity between them that cannot exist: they cannot both be "parfaits," whatever partial similarity there may be between them.

We may say, perhaps, that Madame de Stael's prose is more poetical (in one respect at least) than Young's poetry. Young does not deal in *fiction*. He was *otherwise* inspired.

"Ah ! qu'il est beau ce sentiment, qui, dans l'age

avancé, fait éprouver une passion, peut-être plus profonde encore que dans la jeunesse ; une passion qui rassemble dans l'âme tout ce que le tems enlève aux sensations.”—*Madame de Stael sur les Passions.*

To qualify a man for all that is required for the real enjoyment of the sentiment (not the “passion,” though Madame de Stael’s theory seems to confound the two terms, or feelings—or sensations—whichever she pleases) of love, we may say, perhaps, that he must have in the first instance,

“*Mens sana in corpore sano.*”

Query, does Madame de Stael’s theory leave him either ?

“C’est hors de soi que sont les seules jouissances indéfinies.”—(She might have said *indefinissables.*)

Les passions égoïstes (to speak Madame de Stael’s own language) retrecissent l’âme ; l’amour l’exalte, mais l’amour qui lui-même est exalté.

The *sentiment* of love (not the *passion*) exalts the soul ; and the more, as it is itself the more exalted : to give elevation, it must itself possess it ; if it does not, what more can it do than *intoxicate* ?

But what does Pope make *Eloisa* say ? What indeed she probably said (or wrote) herself,

“O death all eloquent ! you only prove

“What *dust* we doat on when ’tis *man* we love.”

Is this then the “parfait sentiment,” mixed, as it must be, with *sensuality* : and that has so precarious a dependance ?

The talent of writing (and even of thinking) often carries those who exercise it, beyond their mark ; or at least beyond the bounds of reason ; as it seems to have done Madame de Stael. With her, *sentiments* are *passions*. Her reasoning, however ingenious, is more declamatory than argumentative ; more florid than solid.

XCIII.

THOSE who profess themselves to have been made melancholy by reading Young's Night Thoughts, must, I think, be deficient both in thought and feeling. If they had a reasonable share of either, and made a proper use of them, they would find that the melancholy and anxiety suggested by their reflections on the passages of this life, and the prospect of its close, are best to be allayed by such arguments as are offered, and so powerfully enforced, in the Night Thoughts: I say such arguments, for they are such as we find (certainly with much higher authority) in the Scriptures, of which, as I have said elsewhere, Young's poem may be considered as a noble paraphrase.

XCIV.

THE juices that will not ripen in one climate may be reserved to ripen in another; for on what does *maturity* depend? The tree bears its fruit here on earth, to be sure; and in the soil on which it grows; and it is "known by that fruit:" but how many circumstances are required to bring its fruit to perfection! It did not make itself, nor can it command any of these; will it be "cast away," if any of them are adverse to it? No, we trust that it will not: and what too is the perfection required? To what use is the "talent" to be put? What is the "state sincere" in which "every end is accomplished?" Our best attempts may be ill-directed: for our omissions we are certainly responsible; but at what earthly tribunal is that responsibility to be measured?

SOME fruits ripen better by hanging long on the tree.
Which are the worst—natural or moral crudities?

—o—

XCV.

WHAT is the best security for the happiness of life, and the most to be depended upon, for making us contented with ourselves, and respectable to others? Equanimity. What are the best means of attaining this? Piety and resignation.

—o—

XCVI.

AN inclination to find defects in any thing may often arise from a want of power to perceive beauties: we should, however, have an eye open to both.

—o—

XCVII.

DOGMATISM and obstinacy are the natural consequences of partial decisions or rather the causes of them; for when one side or part of a question only is examined, there can be no comparative, and consequently no satisfactory judgment formed. But when was the “audi alteram partem” fairly attended to? When do we do justice, either to our own reason, or to the case that lies before us?

—o—

XCVIII.

IGNORANCE is the parent of doubt, and is itself an answer to it, if the ignorance is such as may be expected

from the nature and condition of man, and suited to all his wants, propensities, and prospects. The proper sense of it may be as useful to him as the application of what he knows.

—o—

XCIX.

WE are apt to undervalue reason, because we see so little of the exercise of it among mankind; but is it the less valuable for this? Rather the contrary; for else, why should the want of it be so much noticed? and we might as well, for the same reason, doubt the existence of it; for “*de non apparentibus*,” &c.

—o—

C.

OUR reason may give us all the anxieties of doubt, and our sensibility those of feeling; but both the one and the other are, under the shelter and sanction of religion, the best preparative for that state in which no anxieties or doubts will remain.

—o—

CI.

WHERE is the “*aurea mediocritas*?” *Aurea* it may well be termed, for it is at least as difficult to be found as the precious metal to which it is compared; and we may be “*tutissimi*” in it; but how is the state to be realised? No, it is an abstract idea (I beg pardon—I should have said, an abstract term,*) impracticable in itself, but as desi-

* See No. LXXXIII.

rable to be approached in practice (and that approach must be chiefly in the *mind*) as any object can be.



CII.

SOME religion must be true, or all must be false; for truth and falsehood cannot be so allied, as they would be if Christianity was not perfectly true; and all other religious systems must derive the share of truth which they possess, from it. As the source of truth, therefore, it must be selected and distinguished from all others, and all the preparations must have been made for it, that are stated in the book which records them, and vouches for its own truth.



CIII.

WE must either disbelieve all interference of providence in the affairs of men, and adopt the maxim of the Epicureans, "*Nihil curat Deus*," or we must believe those that are recorded in the Bible, perfectly as they accord with the nature and condition of man, and the circumstances of human life.

If we cannot understand a mystery which is held out for our reception, we cannot perfectly know what it is that we are to believe: this (which extends to all natural religion) is an answer to any objection to the belief of mysteries which are otherwise well attested; and it should prevent us from attempting to explain what is so much above our comprehension: sufficient if we believe it to be (what Christianity fully proves itself to be) of divine origin. It is when men attempt to explain mysteries, that they

begin to differ about them; and the more, as it sets their heads and hearts at variance with each other.



CIV.

ALL that regards the person and nature of Christ in the Sacred Writings, is wrapped up in mystery; nor is this awful obscurity cleared up to our understandings by the expressions made use of by our Saviour regarding himself. His saying, indeed, "My father is greater than I," does not appear to me to justify its being taken in allusion to his temporary state as man, but that it is a positive statement of his real condition as a being. There are, however, other expressions of his (and those as well authenticated, and consequently as well entitled to our reception as any part of the New Testament,) that indicate an assumption of the highest nature that can be conceived to exist: and these, joined with the passages in St. Paul, &c. ("thought it not robbery to be equal with God," &c.) leave us without a right or a reasonable motive to lower the nature of our Saviour beneath the highest that can be assigned to him. Rash, therefore (to use the lightest term) in the extreme are those, who will not allow what indeed, cannot be brought within their fullest comprehension, but what is supported by evidence that has the strongest demand upon their reason for the allowance of the truths which it attests. As to our being left in the dark respecting the doctrines of Christianity, it may surely be accounted for by a due attention to the nature of the human mind. Less than the awe that this inspires, would not have the effect upon it that is required to impress it with a due sense of its condition and its duties: it is too apt to abuse the knowledge it is capable of acquiring, for us not to suppose

that this abuse would take place at the utmost extent that the human capacity could be carried to ; unless, indeed, man's nature was wholly changed. It is not therefore only the safest, but also the most reasonable way, for us to assign to Christ a divinity of the highest order, and to pay him all the homage that such a divinity requires. The *legacy* (if it may be so called) that he has left us, demands it ; for what higher gift could be bestowed upon us than eternal salvation, and the confident hope of it which his "grace, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost," impart? O then let us prostrate ourselves before his throne, in humble acknowledgment of our unworthiness, our submission, and our gratitude ; let us "embrace and ever hold fast that blessed hope" that the promises of the gospel have given so great an encouragement to, and that they alone can give us a full assurance that it will be realised ; and let us strive to merit it (if merited it can be) as well by our works as by our faith, the one being the produce and the fruit of the other.

—o—

CV.

A MAN will never know how to set its true value upon any thing, till he knows how to estimate *himself*.

—o—

CVI.

SENSIBLE people may have their weaknesses ; but is it not strange, that the weakest parts are more than a match for the strongest ?

—o—

CVII.

WHICH is most seen, the greatness or the impotence of reason, when it is opposed to the passions ?



CVIII.

WHAT a strange creature man is, when his mind exhibits all that he can be, and his conduct all that he ought not to be!



CIX.

VICE is so lost in folly, that one hardly knows whether to pity or condemn it the most. But when it assumes its "frightful mien" ———



CX.

THERE is a sort of greatness, that seems almost incompatible with the softer virtues; but this cannot be true greatness.



CXI.

THE compliment that we pay to ourselves in comparison with others, sometimes allays the bitterness of our anger against them. Thus one vice counteracts another. Vanity does what humility ought to do.



CXII.

WE are sometimes apt to say the loudest, what is the least worth hearing; nay, worse, what had better not be heard at all. Is it because we are fools ourselves, or

are aware that we are addressing such? or are we afraid of making the best of ourselves?



CXIII.

If it was not for our ignorance, we should not have so much to talk and write about. Discussion *closes* when it arrives at its *end*.



CXIV.

If we examine many maxims closely, we shall perhaps find them little more than a play upon words: but if “words are things”——It is no great recommendation of a maxim, however, that it requires a play upon words to set it off.



CXV.

WHEN people understand themselves, they are less likely to misunderstand one another. Quarelling is misunderstanding, and misunderstanding is blundering. Is this what makes a certain nation so quarrelsome?



CXVI.

THERE is perhaps hardly a moment in our lives in which we do not feel the want or the possession of that calm, that presence of mind, without which we can have no real enjoyment of any thing. The society of an

intimate companion is much conducive to this, in enabling us to disburden ourselves of what obstructs it.

—o—

CXVII.

A MAN will not be dictated to; and he is right: for is it not a fellow creature that addresses him? There was but one who had a right to “speak as having authority, and not as one of the Scribes.” But he also said, that “they would not listen to the voice of the charmer, charmed he ever so wisely.” Are we all “deaf adders?” Sad *experience* however comes, and then——

—o—

CXVIII.

PROVIDENCE seems to permit sometimes the abuse of the highest talents, that it may be seen of how little value they are when so abused. Of this we have seen more than one instance in our times.

—o—

CXIX.

WHAT right have we to give ourselves credit for any of our good qualities, when we know so little of the source of them?

—o—

CXX.

To enjoy time, we should be independent of it.

—o—

CXXI.

WE may despise “every-day characters;” but it is an useful shelter; “Defendit numerus.”

 CXXII.

By the castles we build in the air, one would suppose that we expected a "world to come" before our death.

 CXXIII.

BEAUTY is so essential to nature, that there is hardly a spot to be found which is totally divested of every kind and degree of it. If we do not find it on the earth we tread on, we need but to cast our eyes upwards, or on the light that is shed around us. Well therefore might Thomson say—

" I cannot go
 " Where universal love not smiles around," &c.

 CXXIV.

WHAT a refuge does our littleness find in infinity, and how necessary is that refuge!

 CXXV.

PERHAPS we are not at ease in society, till we know what we may expect, and what we owe.

 CXXVI.

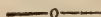
THE good feelings are so intimately connected with each other, that any one infallibly brings on the rest, and the

pleasure this gives to others will certainly revert upon ourselves. There are some appendages to human nature, that should seem to force congeniality.



CXXVII.

WE are often disappointed in our expectation of reward here on earth : is not this a proof that retribution is in better hands ; for somewhere it must be.



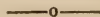
CXXVIII.

IMITATION may as often lead us wrong as right : indeed all is imitation, perhaps even singularity ; but of imitation there is but one proper model.



CXXIX.

How seldom does the eye see through the medium of the mind !— at least that of the judgment. We are easily dazzled : excess, however, generally displeases.



CXXX.

“ CRIME is much oftener protected than innocence.”—
Amelot de la Houssaye's Moral Reflections.

I cannot help thinking that this is saying too much. There are many inducements for a maxim-maker to pass a severer censure upon the world than it deserves. We should ask in the first place, what is here meant by “ protection,” and how much “ innocence” wants it ?



CXXXI.

WHAT is the *maturity* of *thought*? Action.



CXXXII.

WE can hardly suppose that our Saviour meant to guard us against the "world" altogether, but against the abuses of it. It cannot be all "spotted."



CXXXIII.

NOTHING is more pleasing or estimable than a modest simplicity ; and yet how rarely is it to be found, either in the exhibition of ourselves, or of what we possess !



CXXXIV.

A VIVACIOUS French philosopher, speaking of the effects produced by the washing of torrents from mountains, says, that in process of time, the saying of Louis XIV. to his son will be realised : " Mon fils, il n'y aura plus de Pyrenees." Thus our imaginations supply our want of knowledge. How many centuries of centuries will be required for this operation ? " Time costs nature nothing." True, Messieurs les Philosophes : that is, the " Nature" that you have in view. But where is your "*primum mobile* ?"



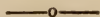
CXXXV.

CONVERSATION is sometimes like some medicines, a "chip in porridge."



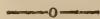
CXXXVI.

How often do those who have feelings suppress the outward demonstration of them, in complaisance to those who have none !



CXXXVII.

SOME people appear to be so void of feeling, that the common rules of religion and morality are not made for them ; and to such cases the text " to whom much is given," &c. may be applied (as judging by its *converse*.) But then it is said, " What I say unto you I say unto *all*, Watch." But even watching may be relative to the power of doing it. It results from all this, that we are totally unable to judge of others ; and it is one of the instances which shew that we may judge of what we have a *right* to do, by what we are *able* to do. It is *ourselves* only that we can and ought to judge.



CXXXVIII.

THOSE who dissent from public opinion, get no further than a state of *doubt*, in which they remain. They can propose nothing, in lieu of what they disapprove of ; except indeed it is a *castle in the air*.



CXXXIX.

THOSE who wish to be convinced of the sluggishness and narrowness of the human mind, need only to attend to the effect which a very little change of situation produces upon it, in the different sensations that are excited by it.



CXL.

THOSE who assign every thing to natural operation, of course will not allow the “visitation of God.” But what *directs* these natural operations?



CXLI.

How much there is in this world of ours, natural and moral, to delight, how much to afflict, how much to encourage, and how much to awe us! And all, all conduce to form one great and decisive state of trial.



CXLII.

To those who consider God only as an Almighty Being, every act of supreme goodness seems to be derogatory from the majesty of supreme power; as if any condescension was beneath it. Thus they sacrifice one attribute to another, little as our *little* minds are able to reconcile them—but necessary as they are to each other.

 CXLIII.

WHAT is often a picture to the eye in nature, may not admit of being made so in representation on paper or canvass, by the pencil or the brush. This perhaps is, because the imagination (the "mind's eye") assists in the first, and also because there is a power of *exhibition* in nature that no art can equal: besides that, there is in the great field of nature an opportunity for the eye to compare and select objects and scenes, that adds to the pleasure we have in contemplating them. Much of this indeed will depend on the state of the atmosphere, as well as on the point of view from which we behold them. The alternate observation of natural scenery and artificial representation greatly assist each other. In the first, the recollection of the latter enables the eye to select pictures; in the latter, that of the first enables it to judge of the justness of the representation.

 CXLIV.

WHEN melody is too flowing, it does not give the mind time to dwell on, or to feel the expression of any particular part of it: therefore slow music will always make the deepest impression, and will be most pleasing to those who are capable of feeling the full power of music.

What is the test of excellence in all utterance, all action? Precision. Without this, there can be no real expression, which should always be in its *proper place*, especially in music, which may be considered as the perfection of utterance. Simplicity too (at least to *unlearned ears*) is no less essential to it. My reader will not confound the precision I have been speaking of, with *precise-*

ness, nor will he suppose that I mean to exclude ease and elegance.



CXLV.

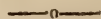
WHAT is the proper definition of poetry? Shall we call it *thought in a fancy dress*? or is not *that* inadequate to the higher kinds of poetry, which however may have a little of that amplification and superabundant ornament which I have heard attributed to poetry of all kinds. Homer indeed calls it the “language of the gods,” and puts it into the “*os magna sonans*” of his Jupiter, &c.; and Horace, speaking of that great master of it, says,

“Qui, quid sit pulcrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
“Plenius et melius chrysippo et crantore dicit.”

The “*plenius*” here, however, may savour a little of the amplification* above-mentioned. Poetry indeed (except

* Some amplification is necessary to attract notice: common life is sufficiently interesting to each individual, as all his responsibility generally lies within the sphere of it—(above or below it, perhaps, temptation may lessen that responsibility,) and all his happiness too; for it is the “golden mean” that alone contains it; but though this will procure the approbation of the reasonable few, and even force that of the great majority, it will be but negative approbation that they give: something above or below it is required to excite their admiration or compassion; and though we are “*tutissimi*” in it, and in having our “moderation known unto all men,” yet we are not content with it.—Exaggeration even pursues us in our dreams. Life itself is but a waking dream.—Nay more, we never think we have attained it: like all other means of human happiness, it lies within our reach, and we never reach it: indeed we always think ourselves either above or below it; if the former, our pride is excited by it—if the latter, our envy: well therefore may we deprecate them both, for pride and envy are the two great characteristics of human nature, as they are the greatest enemies to human happiness; enemies that we encourage both in ourselves

such as the golden verses of Pythagoras) can seldom be so compressed as prose. But we must give all its due credit to the "*curiosa felicitas*," (ah why, Petronius, was you not always guided by that delicacy of taste that this implies?) of Horace, and acknowledge the effects of poetry on our minds when it is so adorned and enforced.



CXLVI.

ALL the three sister arts are indeed linked together in one chain; and as

"From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
"This universal frame began,"

so of that chain does this harmony hold the key, especially in music, the effects of which appear to me to be more indescribable than those of either of the two other arts; but all the three, perhaps, carry the mind beyond the reach of its own intelligence; all in their different modes of action, upon our different organs and affections, have the same effects upon "the diapason, man."

Of the three sister arts, Painting may be the most difficult to carry to perfection: or rather, we have a higher idea of that difficulty, from having so frequently before our eyes the model that it imitates, and which it is impossible to equal. In the other two arts, our idea of perfection is more abstract, from our having no sensible object to compare it with; which made an admirer of Giardini's playing, by a humorous hyperbole, call it "a sound in the abstract." Mr. Locke's imperfect (though acute and profound) trea-

and in others. To secure, in some measure, the peace of both, we may keep these enemies in prison; nay, more, we may disarm them; but to do this, we must have the aid of *religion*—of religion, confirmed and enforced by reason.

tise may perhaps aim at a power in man of having "ideas" that verge towards that perfection which is reserved for him in another world, and which ideas were given to him for that purpose by his Maker. Be this as it may, the powers of man have surely done themselves great honour in rising so high as they have ; and they have only to follow Shakespeare's advice, in not "overstepping the modesty of that nature" which they imitate.

CXLVII.*

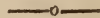
"WORKS built upon general nature will live for ever."

(*Sir Joshua Reynolds.*)

To this it may be said that the duration of the works will depend upon the materials they are built with, and how far they are calculated to stand the ravages of time. It may also be asked, what is meant by "general nature?" If the works she in general displays, there must be at least some selection of the best, and the choice will depend upon the general opinion of mankind, various as that is, and subject to change. The excellence of the works may indeed ensure to them at all times the admiration of a few, as is the case with what is left us of the works of the ancients ; but then in the countries where works in *garden-
ing*, &c. have been executed, the very vestiges of them may disappear in time, and leave no traces to serve as a model for other nations to work by. Those of the ancients indeed appear to have been hardly worth it, as having had little connection with "general nature." The works of nature, the great and only models, will still remain, but the dispo-

* From Pontey's Work on the Management of Trees.

sition and the ability to imitate them must be produced afresh, for we are not always disposed to copy after our ancestors. Such works as Mr. Pontey's and still more "Wheatley's Observations on Gardening," Mason's beautiful Poem, the "English Garden," &c.) may serve to perpetuate the records of them, and to tell mankind that the imitation has once been made, and may again, from the natural originals that still remain.



CXLVIII.

IN considering the beauties of nature, and their imitation by art, the eye is more easily satisfied than the imagination. We compare what we see with our own size, and the space we occupy. That which the imagination has to range in is boundless. Besides this, we consider the proportion that the several parts bear to each other, and the harmony of their forms; for more both of sublimity and beauty depend upon this than on mere size. * An object, however great, would lose its effect upon us, if there was nothing to compare it with. What the eye can take in, it is better able to judge of, and loves more to dwell upon: too much greatness and extent fatigue it. When it admires that, it is probably with a view to the increase of capacity and power that it will possess hereafter.

* This I think is instanced in the Grindelwald, in Switzerland, compared with Mont Blanc and its accompaniments; a huge, shapeless mountain, whose summit pierces the clouds, is more an object for the imagination than the eye. In the Grindelwald, there is every thing that can be required to form a beautiful picture.

 CXLIX.

I THINK we cannot suppose that the recollection of what has passed during our abode on this earth, or of what we have left behind us on it, will make any part of the enjoyments or sufferings of another life ; but that all will be absorbed in the contemplation of one great and supreme Object, or in the misery that will attend the privation of that contemplation, and the sufferings of the state opposed to it. The retrospective view of our misconduct in this life, and the repentance that it would naturally produce, seem more suited to the state of purgatory asserted by the Romish Church, without which that repentance would be of no avail towards the end to which it appears to lead—atonement. For the “just,” and those who have made their atonement* here, the elevation which their minds must feel in the contemplation of the objects of nature (the works of its great Author) cannot but make them look forward to that far higher elevation that awaits them in another life, when no longer

“ Corpus onustum

“ Hesternis vitiis animam, quoque prægravatuna,

“ Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.”

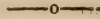
Or indeed without the *prægravation* of the “*hesterna vitia*.”

 CL.

THERE are things of which we are inclined to doubt, from the mere sense of the imperfection of our knowledge ;

* Let it not be supposed that this is meant to exclude or be independent of the great atonement : no, one must accompany the other.

but is not this doubt to be considered as a kind of judgment that we form of them? — a judgment too, that approaches to rejection. How does this accord with the sense we have above supposed to be entertained of the means we have of judging? And in what state ought our minds to be, under that sense? Will the nature of the human mind admit of its remaining in a state compatible with that sense? If not, it must incline to some decision, or at least opinion, concerning those things of which (as is said above) it feels itself incompetent to judge: this opinion must be formed by the best use it can make of the powers it possesses (removing as far as it can all impediments*) which we may well suppose are adequate to the judgment it is meant to form; and for which judgment all the means are given that are necessary for that intended formation. What is wanting to make that judgment absolute, it must wait for, probably in another life, regulating its opinions in the mode best adapted to the purposes required in this, and to what will best fit it for the other.



CLI.

IN what consists perfect peace of mind? Is it in dwelling upon any particular subject that may be most agreeable to us? But that would only be a diversion of the thoughts from other subjects that would be less agreeable, or actually disagreeable, and would last only till the mind became tired of the subject it had been dwelling upon, which must happen to any that would not admit of being associated with others, or that would exclude all others; for the mind must either have all its faculties employed (and that not to

* The impediments I mean are the passions chiefly.

a degree of exertion that would fatigue it) or it must change from one subject to another, that would vary the employment of its faculties; so that its peace, its enjoyment of happiness, would consist in continually changing its object. Indeed an interval of perfect repose and suspension of all thought may be supposed, especially after a course of extreme labour, such as Goldoni, in his very interesting memoirs (which have been compared, for simplicity of style, to the *Memoires de Grammont*) tells us he felt, in the change from his severe and unremitted dramatic exertions, to the delightful repose of absolutely thinking of nothing.

Tranquillity must be essential to peace of mind; but not a stagnant tranquillity, for that would be *apathy*: it must be a tranquillity of which the mind is sensible, and which perhaps must employ all its faculties to produce that sense: it must be a feeling of satisfaction with itself (“*nil conscire sibi*”) but without carrying that satisfaction higher than the nature and condition of the human mind allows; for true satisfaction cannot be at variance with *truth*: the fallacy, when found out, would produce the contrary sensation to peace of mind: the mind, therefore, must not dwell too much on itself, conscious as it must be of imperfections that will be productive of solicitude and regret; or it must only attend to them sufficiently to guard against the causes which excite them.

Peace of mind must be felt, and felt as a state of which the mind is conscious, adverting at the same time to, and retaining the consciousness of it, and of what constitutes it. The best description of the state which we have been trying to define is in the text, “Peace and good will towards man:” for the enjoyment must consist both of self and social love. What is most likely to produce this? Religion: it is *that* alone which can confer happiness on all mankind, and dispose them to conduce to the happiness

of each other: temporal benefits are transient and insecure; those of religion are permanent and inviolable.

Even of these, however, the enjoyment, here on earth, is but an imperfect foretaste of a far higher in another life; in *this* it is but the balm (and the only balm) to the wounds we are daily subject to: but all the most natural, all the most earnest desires of man, are such as cannot find their satisfaction in this life, but must look for it to another. How great then must be the hope of attainment! for why else was that desire given to us? Does that hope meet with discouragements? Dwell upon it, seek the proper means of strengthening it; and then see if those discouragements are not lessened; if they are not entirely done away-



CLII.

IF we do not make our common sense, with the assistance that it is capable of receiving, the means of our understanding the degree of faith and the performance of good works that are required of us, as well as the connection which those two have with each other, we shall be sure to bewilder our minds in the pursuit of that understanding. The proper use of our common sense will teach us what value we are to set on our good works, and how far a previous faith is necessary to produce them. The same disposition indeed is necessary to produce both, and that disposition will make us feel that both can be but imperfectly performed or attained by us. To attain any degree of faith, our *reason* is appealed to, and must be exercised, but it can only be so in comprehending the evidence which has been given for the truth of mysteries which are themselves totally incomprehensible by that reason, which therefore cannot attain that degree of knowledge which is necessary for its complete satisfaction. For this attainment

the Methodists refer us to another feeling which is altogether above, and I may say at variance with our reason, and can only be the child of our imagination. How this can inform or strengthen our reason, to which the Author of our Faith appeals for the reception of his doctrines, it is for the Methodists to show. In substituting another faculty, (if faculty it may be called) they certainly take away the only solid ground that faith can stand upon. But if it is a "gratissimus error" to them, in pity's sake let them enjoy it.

Our Saviour, who came, as Young impressively and justly says, "to give lost reason life," intended that we should exert all our reasonable endeavors towards the attainment of faith (for which he appeals to that very reason) and the performance of good works, and also that we should have a due sense of the imperfection of both, and of our being "unprofitable servants." But he surely never intended that we should have a feeling that is above our natural powers,* which our reason is entirely incapable of comprehending, and which therefore is only cognizable by our imagination. If, in exhorting men to the performance of any of their duties, they are addressed in language which is above the comprehension of their reason, I do not see what good effect can be produced: surely no effect but that of degrading Religion by the most unworthy abuses of it; which accordingly we see practised.



CLIII.

HABIT is a *second nature*: with the assistance of example it will either vitiate or correct the *first*, or confirm it in the good or bad that it has once contracted.

* Nor does he say any thing that implies a promise to give it.

Little singularities may be indulged any where, if they are not offensive, and the more if we live among those whose feelings and conduct are of the right kind ; *they* will not be *jealous* of them ; those singularities will rather give an amusement which will flatter the vanity of the individual who displays them ; and his pride will be equally flattered by the power he has of indulging them. But the *material* parts of conduct must be adapted to the society in which we live.



CLIV.

ASSURANCE—Confidence—how useful are they when well-placed.



CLV.

O YES, “ words are things :” but may we not reverse this ? for is there not a reciprocity between them ?



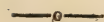
CLVI.

WHAT may we not pick up in the “ broad highway of the world ?”



CLVII.

WE can neither know ourselves nor be known by others, till we are tried, either by ourselves or by them.



CLVIII.

How much does the value of a thought depend on the words in which it is expressed ! If common sense had not a vehicle to carry it abroad, it must always stay at home.



CLIX.

WE sometimes attempt to avoid a disagreeable sensation by running into the opposite extreme to it. This is "incidit in Syllam qui vult vitare Charybdim." Such expedients make life a continual *see-saw*, and an Irishman might say that a man canted himself up and down by sitting at both ends of the plank.



CLX.

WE are such paradoxes, that we sometimes assume an air and tone of confidence, to disguise a real timidity and irresolution of character. A man may put on a bold face to the world, till he persuades himself that he is as bold within as he appears to be without.



CLXI.

"WORDS are things;" so clothe an old thing in new words.—Whether I do this or not, or whether both my things and words (i. e. sentences) are "as old as the hills," upon my word, my good reader, I cannot tell.



CLXII.

A PHYSICIAN can only assist nature ; if she wants that assistance, the less the patient gives her to do, the more chance she will have of recovering her own powers.



CLXIII.

ONE thing in favor of maxim-makers is, that men are continually in want of being reminded of useful truths ; they must be told by others what a moment's reflection would tell them of itself.



CLXIV.

“ God loves from whole to parts,” says Pope. We may say, in the same spirit, that his influence extends to every part of men's thoughts and actions, without being immediately applied to any particular instance of their exercise.



CLXV.

ONE prevalent idea in the mind, though it may not always be present to it, generally forms the character, and regulates the deportment. Or shall we take the converse of the proposition ? Do we know enough of the human mind to say which is cause and which effect ? Suffice it, that they go both together.



CLXVI.

AGITATION of mind (so often indicated by that of the person) must be produced by concurring or contending thoughts. Horace would hardly have "scratched his head" or "bit his nails to the quick," at the suggestion of a simple idea.



CLXVII.

OUR reason is so little able to inform us of what we have to expect (I mean in the events of this world) that we are obliged to have recourse to our passions (as hope, fear, &c.) to help it.



CLXVIII.

It seems somewhat extraordinary, that we should not be capable of imagining what we are capable of understanding. Is it from a want of activity in the mind? or of a proper direction of its activity? Or must we not rather, with our very limited knowledge of the theory of the human mind, resolve this and other talents into what St. Paul says they are—"gifts?" The "gros bon sens" of the common people often expresses this.



CLXIX.

THE power of thought is not so much shewn in conceiving ideas, as in combining them.



CLXX.

THERE is perhaps more of *instinct* in our feelings than we are aware of, even in our esteem of each other.



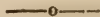
CLXXI.

CHUSING what conduct we are to pursue is choosing what examples we are to follow : much of this will depend upon our earliest associations.



CLXXII.

IF Hypocrisy is the semblance, the "outward sign" of virtue (however "false and hollow" all may be "within") it recommends itself by what it appears to be, not by what it really is. So far therefore it favors the cause of virtue, instead of "cutting its throat," as Rousseau says it does ; and the only mischief it does is in deceiving its admirers. Would Rousseau's pride deprive the Almighty of his sole right of judging hypocrites ? or is that the only trial we are not to submit to ? But Rousseau is not the only cynic whose spleen has blinded his judgment.



CLXXIII.

OUR estimate of what is worth our attention or not, will depend a good deal on what we are or are not used to.



CLXXIV.

WHAT power shall we not assign to habit? But it must have a *beginning*.



CLXXV.

THE consciousness of possessing a talent should beget in us an equal sense of the power from whom we have received it, and "into whose hands," along with "our spirits," we "commend" it. Without this sense, we can neither be sure of using it properly, nor perhaps of using it at all.



CLXXVI.

PUBLISHING our thoughts in a book is no more than communicating to the world what people often do in conversation with each other; that of reasonable and thinking people may often furnish matter for it, if they have a turn and inclination (for on what else does the exercise of ability depend?) to put it to that use. The only difference perhaps is, that retirement in the closet gives opportunity for improvement and correction. It would be well if *extempore* preachers would consider this.

"Can you read and write?" said a Magistrate to an itinerant preacher who had applied for a license. "No, Sir, I cannot," was the answer. "Then how can you think yourself qualified to instruct others by preaching?" "If you do not know what *inspiration* is, I do. There's my shilling—give me my license."



CLXXVII.

THE power in the human mind of conversing with others, and with itself, are equally extraordinary, and may be equally useful.



CLXXVIII.

A THING (perhaps indeed almost every thing) may appear to us to be either important or trifling, according to the light in which we view it, and the objects with which we connect it. In the affairs of men, there are things that are of more or less importance, as being connected with their general habits and what forms their characters, and consequently will determine their expectations both in this world and the next. But we are such inadequate judges of the importance of things, that we are apt to make what are certainly comparative trifles (such as personal vanity, &c.) of real consequence to us. This indeed more affects our intellectual than our moral credit. As man is a mixed being, it is only the great and leading features of his mind that determine his character ; and even these may have their alloys and atonements.

We should be equally careful of what we set a value upon ourselves, and of the estimate we make of the virtues or vices that we observe in others.



CLXXIX.

IN this age of social intercourse and frequent conversation, (such as it is) which has almost superseded all other

resources for the employment of time, Sir Walter Scott's novels, and those of his school, are admirably fitted to the taste of the times they are wrote in. They form not only a subject, but also a model for our conversations. As the works of a man of genius, they are certainly calculated to improve them, if the imitation is not carried too far ; and it will at least be happy, if they make us *talk away* any of our mischievous habits or propensities.

CLXXX.

THE judgment of the world is the more to be depended upon, as it knows when to give credit, and when to make allowances. But we often do more of both to ourselves than the world will do for us ; and therefore we blame it. The judgment of the world is the opinion of a multitude of counsellors, corrected by a few.

CLXXXI.

GOD has availed himself, as we may find in the Scriptures, of the infirmities, and even the vices of men, to produce his own ends, and to draw that good out of evil which he alone is able to do.

CLXXXII.

IF a man is able to think at all, his thoughts must be more or less worth recording. Every *thinker* should therefore have a common place book ; his "tablets," to "set down" what he may think "meet."

 CLXXXIII.

THE necessity of mixing "the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove," in all the transactions of this world, is so great, and the obligations to follow that precept are so indispensable, that it must often make us at a loss which to be guided by, the impulses of our zeal, or the admonitions of our prudence, or how to follow exactly that line of duty, which seems to be in keeping a due medium between the two extremes. In doing this indeed, we appear to be left in a great measure to our own discretion, regulated as that must be by the dictates of our judgment, and (perhaps equally at least) by the bent of our inclination; and in the exercise of our free will, influenced and guided as it necessarily is by these assistants (if they may be called so) lies our responsibility.

 CLXXXIV.

How often is the disbelief or contempt of a thing made the resource against taking the trouble, or acknowledging the want of power, to examine it. "The man talked nonsense," or "told a falsehood," is no uncommon reply to a communication of what has been heard from another. Incredulity is, as we think, a security from imposition, or being taken by surprise. It also itself imposes by the appearance of knowledge, or at least of caution that it gives. A man however may be made the *dupe* of it.

 CLXXXV.

A FEELING of good will towards, a feeling of connection

with the rest of mankind, meet them where and when we may, animates, expands, and elevates the mind : but no dependence upon them ;* none but upon *ourselves* ; if any upon any other human being, all the feelings will be sunk in one common degradation ; or none but sour and unworthy ones will be left to us.

THE "human face" is indeed "divine," when it expresses the feelings that are worthy of man's nature ; no matter whether there is beauty of feature or not ; the expression is all that is required.

CLXXXVI.

WHAT men take for, or at least assert to be, the dictates of their *conscience*, may often, in fact, be only the dictates of their pride. If a sectarian should be required to give a full explanation of the system which he prefers to the established one of his country, he might be strangely puzzled, unless indeed he was allowed to confine himself to objections to the latter ; for in religion, as well as politics, it is much easier to *oppose* than to *propose*. Is it then the spirit of opposition that makes men so conscientious ?†

* I mean, when our circumstances place us above the necessity of it : the subservience then must be voluntarily sought for and incurred : if the circumstances we are placed in, or any other cause makes it necessary to us, *then* the sense of duty, or our personal attachment to a worthy object, will be sufficient to save us from degradation ; and more than that, it will enoble our attachments.

† I would not be supposed to reprobate all opposition ; but only to maintain that there should be good grounds for it, and that men should have something worth offering in lieu of what they oppose ; which those grounds would surely afford them. If they neglect this, I think it will be their passions, and not their reason, that they will follow.

CLXXXVII.

VOLTAIRE somewhere says, that the argument in favor of the soul's immortality, drawn from the change of a caterpillar into a butterfly "*est aussi leger que les ailes meme du papillon.*" But is not Voltaire's reasoning still lighter? For the argument is not founded upon any supposed similarity between the *modes* in which the different changes (of a reptile into a fly, and a body into a spirit) are effected; but upon the fair and reasonable inference, that the same power which has ordained one, is equally able to ordain the other. The human being who walks upon two legs, and the insect which creeps upon many, are alike incapable of conceiving by what mode the different changes in their forms and natures will be effected; and could they conceive this, they would be less fitted for their present state; less formed to answer the purpose of a benevolent Providence, that all its creatures shall have their share of content and happiness in the state they are in at present, whether that state is to be succeeded by a greater share of it in another or not. If, with this share of happiness, there is in man a sense of his capacity for the enjoyment of still greater and more unmixed, and a desire also of attaining it, is not the benevolence of God as much implicated (if I may so express myself) in the fulfilment of that desire, as in the bestowal of the imperfect state of happiness which, after all, does but awaken a desire to attain still greater?—a desire that is as much implanted in our nature, as are the best dispositions to make the most of the means of happiness that are given to us in our present state. This desire then is not discontent, is not ingratitude; it is a well-founded confidence in the justice, truth, and benevolence, of the Almighty Being who has implanted it in us.

VOLTAIRE reasons somewhat better in his poem on the earthquake of Lisbon. In endeavoring to account for the existence of evil upon the earth, he supposes (as others have done) that either the plans of the Creator have been formed and inflexibly adhered to, upon principles independent of, and inexplicable by any notions that we can entertain of the divine attributes, or any expectation that those notions can raise in our minds ; or, *secondly*, that matter itself is incapable of a greater degree of perfection than its Creator has given to it (which, by the bye, seems to suppose a sort of pre-existence, and that independent, too, of matter, or at least of its principles,) or, *thirdly*, that this life is a state of trial ; that

“ Dieu nous eprouve, et ce sejour mortel

“ N’est qu’un passage etroit à un monde eternel.”

But to this he adds—

“ Mais quand nous sortirons de ce passage affreux,

“ Qui de nous pretendra *meriter* d’etre heureux” ?

As if the designs of a bountiful Providence were to be regulated by the *merit* of its creatures ; or as if there were any higher obligation upon it than the exercise of its supreme will and pleasure ! or as if any merit can be pleaded by the creature with the Creator ; or lastly, as if there can be any mutuality of obligation between what is finite and imperfect, and what is perfect and infinite ! Voltaire ends his poem by an addition to the “ Caliph’s” dying address to his Maker :

“ Je t’apporte, O seul Roi, seul Etre illimité,

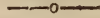
“ Tout ce que tu n’as point dans ton immensité ;

“ Les maux, les douleurs, les regrets, l’ignorance ;

“ Mais (says the poet) il pouvoit encore ajouter *l’esperance* :”

This hope, which the poet leaves at the conclusion,

Rousseau justly enough observes, that he has said every thing to weaken in the preceding part of his poem. From some of the reasoning in it, however, I should be inclined to say, that Voltaire ought to have been a Christian. But, O Vanity, and bad example!



CLXXXVIII.

“PASTILLOS Rufillus olet, Gorgonius hircum.”

HORACE’S satire might perhaps induce “Gorgonius” to borrow some of “Rufillus’s” *Pastilles*, which may also be done by some of the Gorgonii of our times; but it would be better if they would manage their persons and their conduct (which they might very well do) so as not to stand in need of these counteracting odours; their minds, as well as their bodies, would probably be the better for it; for, as the homely proverb says, “Cleanliness and godliness go together:” that is, one virtue induces another, or rather leads to the sum and support of all the virtues, Religion.



CLXXXIX.

HALF of our lives are spent in finding out wants before we have felt them. Should we not be better employed in supplying the *real* wants of others? The transfer would be a pleasing one, and would be returned to us with interest. But the occasions must present themselves; they must be

“oculis subjecta fidelibus,”

or they may be “demissa per aures.”

We may indeed go out of our way in search of them ; but then we must have a direction ; and are there not many ?

If all, however, were employed in supplying their own wants, there would be fewer in need of the assistance of others. But even idleness itself may have its excuses, though the allowance of these should be very limited. Example and encouragement may perhaps be among them, and it may not be easy to ascertain the *bounds of Charity*.



CXC.

THE longing after a future good (or what we esteem such) is not always the anticipation of future happiness in the enjoyment of it. There may have been persons, whose minds have been engrossed by the desire of possessing the property of those of whom they were considered as the heirs. When the time of possession arrived, were they the happier for it ? Perhaps not : they may have then asked themselves that question : and the self-answer may have been, “ No, we are not ; we have purchased it too dearly ; we find now that we want the society of those whom we have lost.”*



CXCI.

A THINKING man is something like Johnson’s “ Rascals in the happy valley,” who, when he had given vent

* How far these tardy feelings may be expected, I know not ; for some hearts are as much hardened by the expectation of riches as they could be by the possession of them.

to his discontented feelings, consoled and congratulated himself with the eloquence with which he had expressed them. The mind will find its own resources, if it is left to its proper action.



CXCII.

ANGELS.—The authority of the Scriptures is very sufficient of itself to vouch for the existence of these celestial beings; and can we, at any rate, suppose that in the great scale of nature, graduated as we see it is, there are none between us and the Supreme?



CXCIII.

THE proper sense of the commandment, “Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you,” I believe is, Do unto others what you would think it right they should do unto you.

“Love your enemies,” as your enemies, but not as enemies to the good that may be in you.

“Return good for evil,” but not as approving, nor as being indifferent towards that evil, but as separating the evil from the person of him who commits it; disapproving the one, but not condemning the other.



CXCIV.

IN Mr. Irving’s sermon, preached at the Caledonian chapel in Hatton Garden, June 13th, 1824, partly extempore, partly from a MS. book, which he occasionally

glanced his eye over, there was some repetition, but more of ideas than words—verbose, however, enough, with much metaphor, and diffuse—much unnecessary detail and explanation—display of oratory, but with great show of feeling, and the most forcible (indeed overpowering) appeals to it—the highest animation and force—and fine description—no fanaticism, but much charity and liberality—*Calvinism* ingeniously and well argued against in the first part of the sermon, afterwards stated as being suited to a strict and zealous age, and *Arminianism* to a loose one—but both as capable of being retained (as, with restrictions, they no doubt are)—much gesture, but varied and appropriate—manner and delivery extremely forcible and impressive—text from St. Paul's epistle, “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people,” &c.—Unchangeableness of God dwelt on in religion, as in the physical world—its effects on the mind of man, in insuring its dependence and confidence, our expectation of the future resulting from our experience of the past, and in religion from our knowledge of the will of God, as declared in the Scriptures—

“A new light, breathed by Christ into our souls.”

(This I believe, is the best and only proper sense in which the expression “new light” can be used.)

“An infinite Being must have infinite regards : taking from them is lessening his nature.”

“If confidence does not increase, it must give way to suspicion.” (Truth also in this.)

Prayers before and after the sermon, long, but good. The English Church prayed for.

—o—

CXCV.

THE generality, the contractedness, and at the same

time the sufficiency of common sense, is shewn in the wandering from (perhaps "ut lucus a non lucendo," for a thing may be shewn by its negative), and losing sight of it, from soaring too high. Necessary information is pretty obvious—if too much sought for, it may become superfluous, or unintelligible. The sphere of common sense is not a very extended one.

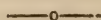
———"See how little the remaining sum
That served the past, and must the times to come."

The rest are

"Tricks to shew the stretch of human brain."

Too much eloquence non raro "nimium probat."

Feeling and intellect may both be lost in the multitude of words (what *pith* can they have in them?) More ideas may be given than information. However, what draws attention, if seriously given, must incline to *seriousness*.



CXCVI.

"THE practice of Duelling, to the disgrace of a Christian society, has long been suffered to exist with little restraint or opposition." — *From Wilberforce's Practical View,* &c. page 219, 2d. edit. 8vo.

If this practice was abolished, the object of "worldly estimation" would be changed; for the latter would most probably be in favour of what was generally practised; and there would no longer be a choice to be made between "the favor of God and the favor of man," as between two opposites; for it can hardly be supposed that the practice and the estimation of the world would be at variance with each other. In this instance, then, the world would not be of the description given of it in Scripture; and the

“Prince” of it would have lost his “power.” Can we hope that such a change will be brought about? If it could, the interests of society would in all probability be benefitted by it; at least if we consider the pursuit of *rectitude* as being favourable to them.

I cannot see how the “refinement and courtesy” of society can be carried to their greatest height, even in its “more contracted sphere,” by the practice of duelling, and the *laws of honour* which sanction and sometimes require it. What concessions must we make to existing customs? Surely an age would be more refined and courteous (if refinement and courtesy are of the nature of virtues) in which a savage practice was not in use.

Human prudence (or timidity) must not restrain the efforts of zeal; but it may, and must regulate the mode in which they are made. What merit or satisfaction shall we have in defeating our own ends? And cannot we judge of what will do it? Non solum “animæ nostræ,” sed etiam aliorum animæ “liberandæ” sunt.

“Be ye perfect, even as,” &c. may perhaps be applied to the world collectively, as to individuals separately; but is not struggling with the ——— what shall we call them? ——— prejudices? ——— inferences of the world, “kicking against the pricks?”

O! do not oppose the sacred text to this, unless we can more fully understand and apply it.

CXCVII.

THERE are two ways (amongst others) of being metaphysical; I mean of drawing metaphysical conclusions; one is, by the misuse of reason; the other, by the abandonment of it. Philosophers are apt to do the one, and enthusiasts the other.

CXCVIII.

THE most useful knowledge is in combining and comparing ideas. For how else are we to form our opinions?

To reason deeply, we must reason clearly. Dr. Johnson's idea (applied by him to Pope) that "all shallows are clear," (it was to a lady that I think he said it) was not in my opinion a very just one. *Mud* may easily be stirred up, without going very deep for it.

Pour elever les idées, il faut les *approfondir*.*

CXCIX.

THE possession of power, and the fear of losing it by any compromise with the principles of liberty,† (which should be well defined and modified—not "radical") can have but one effect upon the human mind. I do not mean that of making men tyrants, but certainly that of preventing their gaining, or deserving, the love of their subjects.

If power can have any solid foundation, it must be in public opinion (or acquiescence, if we please:) and this must be the result of concurrent principles: when they have a separate or partial influence on the public mind, the effect must be more or less mutable and precarious.

* We want a word for this in our language. Will *approfond* do? *Fathom*, I think, but poorly expresses it.

† Perhaps the word liberty cannot be better defined than by making it synonymous with *justice*.



CC.

THE more men *really* know, the more they will agree together: it is *ignorance* that breeds disputes and discord. But this real knowledge must first be attained; and perhaps the giving and receiving it may both be difficult: Without it they never can understand one another; and misunderstanding, as I have said before, is quarrelling.



CCI.

IDEAS should neither be too obvious, nor too far fetched: if the former, they are hardly worth the trouble of stating. It is a bad compliment to a man's understanding to tell him that two and two make four; nor will he be much instructed or amused by being puzzled. Why should we take a long journey, to bring nothing home after all?



CCII.

LAWYERS and physicians are generally held to be sceptics: and it is no wonder, as they deal so much in doubtful cases; considering them too, as they commonly do, on the worst side. And as to feeling, they have little to do with that, except it is to feel, the one the pockets, the other the pulses, of their clients and patients.

CLXV.

Salisbury Arms Inn, Hatfield, June 16, 1824.

SAW Hatfield-House, a place where there is as much human grandeur, human antiquity, human respectability, and natural beauty (except in the water, of which it is to be regretted that there is not a better piece) as can well be in the residence of a subject and a British Nobleman, and how interesting to British feelings ! much more so, indeed, than the sister seat of the Cecils, Burleigh, where the park scenery is more extensive and more finely wooded, but where the house, though imposing as a whole, is yet frittered into parts that make it much inferior to the simple, and I may say unpretending dignity of Hatfield-House, the character of which has been well preserved in the repairs and alterations that have been made. Burleigh, I believe, has undergone none. The inside of the latter, though possessing some good pictures, and beautiful carvings in wood by Gibbons, contains much fewer relics that connect it with the history of our country, there being many interesting portraits, &c. in Hatfield-House. The environs of the two places admit of still less comparison with each other. Were I put to my choice, I should not hesitate between them ; nor (let me add) would I give up thee, O Swinton Park, near as thou art to the Western moor-lands of the vale of York, and distant (no worse for that) from the Capital, and humble in comparison with the places I have been describing : I would not give thee up for either of them.

CCIV.

LIFE wears itself out, and the stream of time only leads

to the ocean of eternity. I much doubt whether it is good policy in man to wish to add to what he is generally so little prepared (however he may, "in all the magnanimity of thought," have "resolved and re-resolved") to answer for the use he has made of it. Man may be said to be, for a while, God's delegate in the use of time: that of eternity, the "Inhabitant august" of it reserves, we may presume, entirely to himself.



CCV.

HORACE'S "*vitium fugere*" resolves itself into *vitium non petere*, for vice seldom throws itself in a man's way, unless he seeks for it. Virtue, too, as well as vice, must be sought for. But how little merit can we assume to ourselves, when we have so little share in chalking out the path we take! O favored then of God, when even the means of acquiring his favor are not thine own! God gives the temptation to be resisted, and the strength to resist it. What then is left for man to do? To "walk humbly" with his maker; and well may we give "glory to God," when nothing is our own, not even the free agency that we are responsible for the use of. Is it *fate*, then, that binds us? No, we have a *choice* left to us. But what determines that choice? No matter; our responsibility depends upon the measure of it that is meted out to us. We are then *conscious* agents, unconscious as we may be of the springs of our agency. To be "cleansed" from our "secret faults," one thing is required of us—*humility*. O worm, how well is that fitted for thee!

Ah! "*video meliora proboque;
Deteriora sequor.*"

Strive then, strive; and let your efforts be prepared by *reflection*.



CCVI.

PLEASURE should be rather an effect than a cause ; rather the result of an action, than an inducement to it. If the motive is of a higher kind, pleasure will follow of course.



CCVII.

I THANK thee, O Lord, from the bottom of my heart I thank thee ! for what have not I (and may I not say we all ?) to thank thee for ?



CCVIII.

THE highest human enjoyments awaken in a feeling mind the anxious thought, will not this be accounted as sufficient for me ? and will it not be said to me, " Verily thou hast had thy reward ?" How well calculated this is at once to check and to raise exultation ! to raise it to that pitch at which it ought to be ! For what are the *real* enjoyments which *religion* has not a share in producing ?



CCIX.

EVERY thing* gives pleasure to a mind capable of feeling it. The delightful feelings of the mind are often awakened, 'tis true, in our present state ; but in what state will they

* I mean however trifling.

be (to use a homely expression) *broad* awake? In what state shall we drink of that full cup, of which we here do but *taste* the sweets?

CCX.

THE forms of nature are often beautiful; but what would they be without the clothing of wood and verdure, such as it is in Hertfordshire? In the natural world the beauty is exterior; the moral beauty is all *within*.

CCXI.

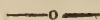
WE travel from inn to inn; and what else is there in life? for all human dwellings, however delightful, however magnificent, “offer but the changes of a caravansera.” True, Derveish, they do so; but there is a *dwelling* of the *mind*, even here, that is more *fixed*.

CCXII.

MY dear countrymen, why are you always running away from yourselves? for that is what a Frenchman justly reproaches you with, when he sees you scampering full gallop, or “*escamotent les fesses*,”* (as M. de Cazales humorously called it) on horseback, or rattling away in a chaise and four, at the desperate rate (which some would call *creeping*) of twelve miles an hour, as if your lives depended on your arrival at a given moment at your houses in town or in the country, where you are stupified with *ennui*, from not

* Rising in the stirrups.

knowing what to do with yourselves the remainder of the day of your arrival. Is not life itself a journey? and can you really enjoy any part of it when you have so little enjoyment of that continual change of scene (varied, however often we may have seen it) with which nature would fain gratify you, if you would allow her? O! let me not talk to the winds, or to beings lighter and emptier than they are!



CCXIII.

THERE is a hollowness of sound which in the calm of a summer's day is as pleasing to the ear as that of visible forms to the eye. Such is the sound of the horses' feet on the road, that now meets my ear. When carried to a certain degree, it gives the idea of smoothness, firmness, and elasticity, as the other does of softness, undulation, variety, and harmony: carried too far, they both present the idea of harshness, discordance, confusion, and sometimes of danger.



CCXIV.

IT is want of action in the mind, such at least as suits it (I mean a rational mind) that creates restlessness in the body.



CCXV.

CONTRAST and change, though it may not be for the better, is generally agreeable: so varied are our enjoyments,

and so disinclined are we to dwell long on the same object. But those of religion, though uniform are always pleasing. Is it not that we are born for another state than that we are now in?



CCXVI.

NOTHING does our countrymen less credit than the insolence of their demeanor towards foreigners: it is wholly unworthy of the good sense and liberality that are attributed to them, and so far from being characteristic of a gentleman, if any thing makes us deserve to be called “a nation of shopkeepers,” it is that. Indeed those are most apt to show it who are just come from behind a counter. Goldsmith might say,

“Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
“I see the lords of human kind pass by.”

And Johnson might talk of the pride it made him feel, as an Englishman. But these are not the sentiments either of a gentleman or a christian.



CCXVII.

WHEN men fatten up hogs, oxen, &c. (which, by the bye those “Lords of human kind” are fond enough of doing) like *one* in a print now hanging before me in this illustrious inn at Biggleswade (a very good one, pour le dire en passant,) I am almost tempted to say of my fellow creatures, that they are greater *beasts* than those they make.

 CCXVIII.

How satisfied do the good people of Bedfordshire appear to be with the rich flat they live in! They envy not, not they, the beautiful variety of Hertfordshire, its woods, luxuriant foliage, &c. surrounded as they are with their meadows, their crops of corn, onions, beans, rape, &c. O, 'tis from hence that the fat oxen must have come, for I see all their feeders have the same make.

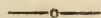
A hanging flat (if I may so call an inclined plain) is almost as bad as what is called a dead flat; nay, it is worse, for it forces the eye to dwell upon it, tame, and uninteresting as it is. O Bedfordshire, thy corn-fields may "laugh and sing," but the sadness of thy willows, and the pools they overhang, are very infectious! The neatness of the cottages, however, their gardens, &c. atone for the want of beauty in the country they are placed in. Men are then just to themselves, as Providence is to them. The trees (from where I now look at them) are all comparatively poor; is it that such a flat does not want the shelter they would afford? O no, a prostrate and naked oak tells me what has thinned them. But here are the woods of Southoe, &c. and the plantations of Brampton too. Aye, these make sufficient amends.

Is it the sea that has given this "fatness" to the land that it once overflowed? or is the *Ouse* the relic of an ancient *Nile*? Probably the former, for its deposits would be more easily made on a flat, than on a hill side.

 CCXIX.

Are not the transports into which we are sometimes

thrown by the contemplation of sublime objects, or the strong excitement of our affections, proofs of the unfilled capacity of our minds? So you may say (perhaps the answer will be) of the transports evinced by animals, in their motions, the sounds they utter, &c. Yes, but *are their's* accompanied by *mind*? And can we go higher than mind, in our ideas of *spirituality*?



CCXX.

THE eye sees hardly a form in nature that does not suggest some beautiful analogy, some kindred feeling, some pleasing recollection, some subject of imitation, some part of a whole which may be so combined as to form a picture or a real scene of nature. How much is added to the beauty of these by the various tints and colours, lights and shades, either belonging to the objects themselves, or given to them by the ever-changing state of the atmosphere, as the shifting clouds “imbibe” or give way to “the rising or the setting sun’s effulgence,” when the beams of the morning open, or the shades of evening close the scene; close it, not on the wearied eye, but as giving a short intermission to the pleasure it has been enjoying, to add fresh pleasure to it on each succeeding day. Delightful are the enjoyments that are thus continued, with a variety that never cloy, and that nature alone can give.



CCXXI.

THE pure, the simple, the rational enjoyment of man,

seems to be one great end in the Creation : and if man finds so much to admire in the works of the Creator, how much more must those beings find, who can understand them better than he ! Increase of knowledge must be increase of admiration.



CCXXII.

THE rooks that I see dispersed over the ploughed land must, I think, be more in search of insects (the cockchafer-grub particularly) than of any seed that may have been sown ; for the former must probably be to them more palatable food than the latter, and it is more consistent with the general economy of nature, and with the benevolent purposes of its Author (in favor of man especially,) that such a production as grain, which is useful for many purposes, and which costs considerable labour in producing (being in great measure the produce of art,) should be spared, at the expence of one which is common with other productions of nature, and which exists chiefly for the maintenance of its own species, and to be the prey of other animals, such as the rooks that are now feeding upon it. Let then this useful bird be spared, and let it rather be the object of man's gratitude than of his enmity.

Many indeed are the vulgar errors (and I fear that the term of vulgar may be applied to many who ought to be above it) that subsist relatively to the properties and habits of the animal creation. The hedge-hog, the common snake, the lizard (commonly called newt or eft) have all been reckoned as noxious or venomous, though in fact they are all innocent. Nay even that beautiful little bird, the Creeper (*Certhia Europæa*) has been singled out

as the object of a persecution that one would hardly suppose any imagination, however assisted by folly or caprice, could have suggested. When will men learn to unite common sense with common observation? One would be inclined to suppose that it is either cruelty or fear, or the reciprocal influence of both, that governs their treatment of the animals over whom their power extends.

CCXXIII.

OUR lives begin and end (if our feelings and tastes remain unvitiated) with the love of nature; and every other feeling has its source in that. With what pleasure do we, as life advances, return to the enjoyments of our childhood, with a higher sense of them, and better understanding of their value, than we could then have! Will not this make some part of the preparation for the life that is to follow?

CCXXIV.

ALL is cause and effect in nature; all is position and consequence in reasoning; for as one thought brings on another, one may be said to be the consequence of the other. The intermediate links of the chain may indeed be many, as analogies are often far-fetched; but if the connection, however distant it may be, is a real one, they cannot be said to be merely imaginary. And in what is similitude founded? How are ideas associated? Nothing positively new can be invented: all is combination: would the combination present itself to the mind unless there were some grounds for it?

CCXXV.

I SHOULD like to know what opinion Physicians have of *Alteratives*. Their supposed effect on the constitution must be produced in some way or other by all remedies, for the most active must have a remote, as well as an immediate effect upon the human frame. That of all alteratives, whether given in the shape of pills, lozenges, &c. may be produced by other causes than those to which it is ascribed, so that the recommenders of those nostrums can give no proof of their real efficacy; part of which may, and I should think must be owing to the rules and habits we observe while taking them, and this may be assisted by the "*crede quod habes et habes.*" Unfortunately our luxurious habits of life, &c. make the application of stronger remedies, even poisons, but too necessary, and how far this may produce the moral and physical vitiation of this and succeeding generations, is hard to say; however, the present state of society, in many respects, presents a more encouraging prospect.

N. B. This ought to have been after No. 162.

CCXXVI.

I HAVE said before, that distant analogies are deserving of some respect, when the nature of the subject in question, and the circumstances attending it, forbid a nearer approach, or a closer similitude.* But some minds are sensible of a

* The radiations of truth are very extensive; may we compare the light they throw with that which emanates from our sun? and the discoveries they give rise to, with those of the most distant planets?

lighter touch than others. Surely we do not always require to have *truth* "beat into us!" May we not meet it half way?

CCXXVII.

How often does attachment to one thing produce aversion to another, merely because our *little* minds cannot do equal justice to two objects, small as may be the difference between them. Our reasoning partially may arise from the partiality of our attachments, as well as from our limited powers of reasoning.

CCXXVIII.

If it is true that every man is an epitome of all mankind, to know others we should begin with the knowledge of ourselves; and perhaps, as a final reference, end with it. But what mere amplification are these of that simple, important, and old established truth,* *Γνωθι σεαυτον* !

CCXXIX.

IN natural scenery the dress is often the work of man, but the character should be in nature, and the dress should be suited to the character. The "genius of the place" should be consulted in all.

* A maxim founded in truth, is truth itself.

 CCXXX.

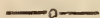
How do objects lose their effect by becoming familiar to us ! What can be more beautiful than a stately tree, with its spreading arms, and its rich and luxuriant foliage ? By repeated observation we cease to look upon it with the admiration it deserves, and we regard it only *en masse*, or as making part of a landscape ; but what can escape this indifference, when it is felt, in beholding (as Lucretius observes) “*cœli clarum purumque colorem* ?” Nay, even the multitude of brilliant lights that bespangle this rich canopy ! The mind then must be awakened to consider what they appear, and what they really are ; and what, without mind, should we be, above the beasts of the field ? What are we, when we do not make the proper use of the mind we possess ?

 CCXXXI.

ALTHOUGH private prayer, in our own chambers, where none are present except God and ourselves, is in some respects preferable to that in a Church amongst a numerous congregation, yet I think that the medium between them, a private chapel, in which there are only the family and a few tenants and dependents assembled, is by no means desirable. If the example of persons of rank and fortune is likely, as surely it is, to have any influence over others, the more extensive that influence is in so good a cause as the diffusion of religious feeling, the better. Besides, it must be gratifying to a feeling mind to be associated with so many others in their “common supplications” to the throne of grace, in a place where all may be considered as on an

equal footing? or if unequal, only rendered so by the different degrees of warmth and sincerity with which their prayers are addressed: and where the suggestions of pride, in being looked up to by servants and dependents, are less likely to take place. The more these are sunk in the participation of one common sentiment, the nearer will be the approach to that communion of souls, when all will join in one common act of adoration to their great Creator.

Distinctions, and "respect of persons," in a cause in which all except the good and bad, are certainly on a level, are surely, to say the very least, mistaken ones. Worldly distinctions there must necessarily be; but they all should be subordinate and have a decided reference to that great concern in which we all have an equal share.



CCXXXII.

If in a disputed case, too much attention is paid, too much redress given, and I might almost say too much justice done to one side, it is ten to one but the opposite side will have been injured, and injustice done to it;* for justice should be "*even handed*." This seems to be instanced in the case of the Missionary Smith, now before the House of Commons, I mean the arguments of the opposition members in favor of the memory of Mr. Smith, in which, indeed, Mr. Canning, and the speakers on his side, in part agree, with allowances for the intention of the Court which tried Mr. Smith, which the opposition members do not appear disposed to make, probably as conciliation is not an opposition principle. June, 1824.

* Will not the maxim, "*summum jus summa injuria*," apply here?

CCXXXIII.

IT is to be lamented, that those whose lives are of the greatest value to others, often set the least value upon them themselves; that the same dispositions that make their friends anxious for the preservation of their lives, make *them* less anxious, if not totally indifferent about it; in short that they are neither desirous to live for themselves nor for others, and yet they may have a tenderness of heart that attaches them to those friends, and makes them wish to preserve them; but they will not preserve themselves for them: they do not, in this case, "do as they would be done by." Strange that the best, or at least the most amiable qualities of man, should be thus at variance with that prime faculty, his reason. Self, that is self-indulgence, is, I fear, at the bottom of all this; and perhaps the want of a still higher principle than that which governs their conduct. In what light this places them with their Creator, who can tell?

CCXXXIV.

CONFIDENCE, how desirous are we of enjoying thee! and how many obstacles there are to that enjoyment, to our either giving or receiving thee! Thus the highest pleasures of the human heart are denied to it; denied, no doubt, with the design of making it look to still higher. No, confidence must not be "put in any child of man." And yet we must love and be loved; but with the view of promoting in others

and cherishing in ourselves, a higher love than that of our fellow-creatures.

The love of God towers above all the other virtues, and includes them all.



CCXXXV.

IF the heart is right, all is right; for the separation that we are apt to make of head and heart, may not be so just as we imagine.



CCXXXVI.

WHATEVER virtues we practise at home, we shall be likely to carry abroad with us: for they will not be founded in *ostentation*.



CCXXXVII.

ALL the precepts of the Gospel are equally applicable to all times; for the nature of man is, fundamentally, always the same.



CCXXXVIII.

DOES not our attachment to our own homes betray a secret desire of attaining that home which will last for ever? If we are "born but to die," there should be surely something to reconcile us to death; for what is natural, should be the wish of unperverted nature,

whence then our repugnance to die? Perhaps from the uncertainty of what is to follow. There seem to be two ways of avoiding the fear of death; by thinking little or by thinking a great deal.

If we also "reason but to err," it may be from the uncertainty we really feel in our opinions, which we acquire in a manner we hardly know how or why; and this very circumstance (paradoxes we as are) may shew itself in the tenacity with which we adhere to our opinions, thus substituting a factitious for a natural adherence; for what claim to certitude can a creature have, who knows so little (with all his boasted reason) as man? What we have, we acquire, but the disposition to acquire must be natural; on what then depends the acquirement? All enquiry must resolve itself into a first cause; all comes from God; but *how* it comes we know not, nor indeed even *why*: we may see final (or rather immediate) ends, but "ultima latet."

What is *certain* to us, we know only from experience, which affords indeed a reasonable *presumption*, The vain attempt to extend our knowledge further seems to be evinced in such works as Pope's "Essay on Man;" much useful knowledge, however, though attainable, as Johnson said, by our nurses (that is, by common sense) is contained in that poem, recommended as it is by the engaging manner in which it is delivered.

—o—

CCXXXIX.

WERE we to examine nature through, we should probably find many things that could not be explained (as being necessarily produced) by mechanical or any other natural principles, and which therefore we could only

ascribe to the wisdom and benevolence of the Creator: to these indeed all must be ascribed; for principles like other acting causes, did not make themselves. What then could that vain Frenchman, Buffon, mean by talking (as Herault de Sechelles tells us he did) of being satisfied with the agency of levers, pullies, &c.?

—o—

CCXL.

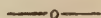
Who thinks deeply must feel deeply too.

—o—

CCXLI.

WE are apt to attribute the opinions of others, if they happen to differ from our own, to weakness, caprice, enthusiasm, or any thing but sound reason; seeing, as we do, such a variety of opinions among our fellow creatures, and so many absurd and mistaken ones; and not considering how apt we are ourselves to form hasty and undigested ones, trusting as we do, to the impulse of the moment, or to the force of habit or prejudice, for the entertainment and delivery of them, or having adopted the opinions of others, from our want of power or inclination to give that examination to a subject (especially if it is a difficult and important one) that will enable us to form an opinion of our own: all this disinclines us from giving credit to what we are not previously prejudiced in favor of. But when we see instances of persons who have led the most uniformly reasonable lives, who have persevered in opinions that will bear the test of examination, even if they should differ in some respects, especially that of seriousness and

earnestness, from the common opinions of the rest of mankind, and who manifest those opinions and feelings at a time when all the powers of the mind are put to the severest trial — I mean at the approach of death, we cannot but ascribe that manifestation to the influence of the most fervent and heartfelt piety, sanctioned by the soundest reason. But to dispose us to examine this important matter so as to enable us to form a just decision upon it, we must be impelled by a sincere and earnest desire to ascertain the *truth*.



CCXLII.

THERE may be mysteries which, as being totally above our comprehension, we are inclined to doubt of, if not entirely to reject: but it behoves us to consider, first, whether the truth of those mysteries is not attested by comprehensible and sufficient evidence (and this examination should be a fair one), and secondly, what would be the consequence of our rejecting them, and forming an opinion opposite to their reception: if they are sufficiently sanctioned by that evidence, and if the opposite opinion is manifestly an absurd and untenable one, it surely behoves us to assent to the truth of the mysteries, ascertained as it is by a test that may fairly be called *infallible*.

This too is a *recurrence*; but is it not a natural one?



CCXLIII.

GOOD sense is common sense well applied. The possession of it is shewn in the use.

 CCXLIV.

STUPIDITY generally proceeds either from laziness or unwillingness. For this reason, perhaps, the common people in Yorkshire call obstinacy by that name. Want of ability is more shewn in not doing a thing well, than in not doing it at all.

 CCXLV.

SICKNESS in the North is called "silliness." This seems to confound the disease (or weakness) of the mind, with that of the body.

 CCXLVI.

How chained down, with most of us, is the mind to the sphere of action it has been accustomed to, and almost to that in which the body moves.

 CCXLVII.

PERHAPS there does not a thought or feeling occur to a well-disposed and regulated mind, that does not make it sensible of what it is, and what it is capable of being.

 CCXLVIII.

LIFE is feeling; and feeling is thought. What we *feel*

we are; this is the “*crede quod habes et habes.*” But let us not *mistake* our feelings.

CCXLIX.

THERE are no good feelings but what will verge towards the highest and the best.

CCL.

A THOUGHT worth dwelling upon will *ramify* into many others. So indeed will bad ones.

CCLI.

WHAT can we do better for ourselves than encourage those feelings which sometimes rise to the eyes, and suffuse them with tears?

CCLII.

THERE are, perhaps, few unpleasant feelings that arise in our minds, but what may be ascribed to an evil principle.

CCLIII.

How fleeting are our thoughts, and how they attract and repel each other! But it may well be so, various as

they are, and fertile as the field is that produces them: for what do we know that is more extensive and fertile than the world we live in?

CCLIV.

WE may "sow the seed," and we may "water the plant," but God "gives the increase," and he allows *weeds* to grow (and thrive too) in his garden: and is it the same soil that produceth both? Yes, it is. How much then depends on *cultivation*!

CCLV.

I FEAR our first impulses are not always good-natured ones. Is it *self-defence* that forces us to this? O no: though that may sometimes be the *plea*.

CCLVI.

HABIT is a second nature; but it is also in our power. Socrates appears, from his own account of himself, to have been an instance of this, and perhaps from the appearance of his features.

CCLVII.

THE greatest advantages that we can have over our fellow creatures can only make us less exposed to hazards: they cannot exempt us from them.



CCLVIII.

THERE are persons (and, we may trust, many) whose characters are so amiable, that if any others express a dislike to them, we may fairly ascribe it (in part at least) to *envy*.

But even this description cannot ensure them from being injured, and even spoilt, in various ways: the common “wear and tear” of the world may do it: the “*sincerum vas*” may be “incrustated;” as the finest and most polished vessels are most likely to be injured,



CCLIX.

THE difficulty that we find in accounting for the foreknowledge of God, associated with the free will of man, perhaps only shows how little we know of causes and effects; and is one proof, among many, of our ignorance. Why should we not remain contented under it? especially as the sense of it conduces so much to the *knowledge of ourselves*.



CCLX.

WE approve the most of those opinions, spoken or written, that accord most with our own.



CCLXI.

THE *security* (as well as the delight) that arises from

good feelings, which will tell us where our best security lies, is more to be felt than described.

—o—

CCLXII.

WE feel, as St. Paul did, the “body of death” within us; but we also feel, as no doubt he did, a principle of life, a “*vis vitæ*,” which will help, with higher assistance, to “deliver” us.

—o—

CCLXIII.

WHEN a work is offered us for our perusal, we should ask, not what thought and attention it will require, but whether it is *worth* it or not.

—o—

CCLXIV.

LEARNING is too apt to keep common sense in awe, and to avail itself of its timidity and diffidence, in making it receive what it cannot understand, and what learning itself understands no better, though common sense gives it credit for a full understanding of it. This gives to learning all the folly of pride, and is a sort of retaliation for the slavish acquiescence that it has imposed upon common sense.

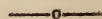
N. B. The abuse, not the proper use of learning, is here meant.

—o—

CCLXV.

PROFESSIONAL men (particularly actors) sometimes

lower themselves beneath their own level, to put themselves upon a par with that of their auditors, whose applause prevents the shame that these exhibitors would otherwise feel.



CCLXVI.

IT is one great object with men in society, to know as much of each other as they can, for which they have various reasons. It should then be equally the object with individuals to be known (if they are known at all) as much to their own advantage as their good conduct will make them be.



CCLXVII

THE uncertainty of future events is far more than compensated by the certainty that they are “appointed” (for foreknowledge is appointment) by God. What then have we to do but to resign to, and trust in him?



CCLXVIII.

WELL, my septuagenarian friend and fellow-traveller, are you not glad that you are approaching to your home? For what journey can we wish to last for ever? A social home, too, and where we shall meet with none but *friends!* And if time is really nothing, of what consequence is it whether life is long or short? Of none, if it is *well-spent.*

—o—

CCLXIX.

SWIFT'S idea of "meditating upon a broomstick," is not so chimerical as we may imagine; for if all is connected, will not a broomstick make part of the chain? And may not trifles be made of importance? Not exactly in the way, perhaps, that Swift treats them.

—o—

CCLXX.

LIFE'S sufferings, various and manifold as they are, its troubles, distresses, pains, afflictions, its vacuities, satieties, &c. all, all want a comfort, a refuge, an encouragement to look forward to better scenes and more unalloyed enjoyments. There is but one, and that is as ample, as sure, and as permanent, as any of these wants can require.

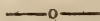
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CCLXXI.

AMIDST all the trials that we are subjected to here, can we suppose that a trial is not meant to be made of our *minds*? And can this mental trial be better made than by requiring of us the belief of what is indeed above our comprehension, but of which the truth is vouched for by the best evidence that in such a case we are capable of receiving? What is denied to us in this? The gratification of our pride, and are there not a thousand instances in which our pride requires to be humbled? A reasonable pride is still left to us; and can we in reason desire more? Do

not exclaim with Lorenzo, reader, "this is a beaten track :"
if you do, I shall answer,

"Is this a track
"Should not be beaten? Never beat enough,
"Till enough learnt the truths it would inspire."



CCLXXII.

THE bird is formed in the egg: to fly, it must be full-fledged; but when may not the *soul* take wing? What is required for her flight is given her with her existence: the rest is prepared in *heaven*.



CCLXXIII.

CURIOSITY, the leading feature of the human character, is often more the result of idleness than of a desire to learn, or at least to learn what is really useful; and as to instructing others, I am afraid that it is not generally thought such a "delightful task" as Thomson describes it to be. The "*radix amara, fructus dulcis*" of honest Lily's Grammar, does not sufficiently tempt young minds (which seldom look forward) to undertake the process implied in it: for this reason, education requires and deserves all the attention that is now bestowed on it. As curiosity may be considered as the basis of a desire to *know*, the excitement and regulation of that will of course be the great object of that attention. Fear has been hitherto made too principal a part of education: the "rod" should certainly be "spared," but not wholly laid aside. Fear in one shape or another (for it operates differently on different

minds) must have a necessary controul over us ; but *terror* rather deters (as its name implies) than excites ; and in its action on us, whether considered as cause or effect, it abases rather than exalts. The “love” that “casteth out fear” is the description of a mind made perfect ; and that perfection, as in all other moral or religious points, should be the object of human endeavors. The fear of God, however is, as necessary as the love of God, and must exist in the mind before it can be “*cast out*” by the other : and as God deals with us, so should we deal with our fellow creatures : for what is life but education ? We know that God can punish as well as reward. No spring in the great moral machine of man should be left untouched,* but different instruments require different touches ; the “*piano*” and “*forte*” indeed, will apply to the human mind ; and what is the human mind but an instrument in which harmony or discord prevails ? Rousseau’s reasoning on education is drawn, as in other instances, from the peculiar bent of his mind. Perhaps no system can be formed that is applicable to all cases ; and the deviations from it must be the result of observation and experience.



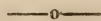
CCLXXIV.

I AM not sure that the changes proposed in early education, of substituting more serious and reasonable objects to children, in lieu of the trifling nonsense addressed to them by their nurses, and often by their *mamas*, &c. is altogether judicious. We recur with delight to the latter in our advanced years, which perhaps we should not do, if these early reminiscences were of a more serious kind ; we should not then make the comparison between the “childish

* *Emulation* therefore ought surely to be excited.

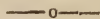
things" of which St. Paul speaks, and the things which took place of them when he "became a man;" comparisons which perhaps constitute the chief part of the pleasure which these reminiscences give us. I do not mean to recommend a continuation of all the nonsensical stuff that children's minds* have been filled with, much of which may be liable to still greater objections than have been made against it: but that the "milk of babes" should be sufficiently appropriate to their age, and distinguished from the knowledge which they afterwards acquire.

But I must confess that I have not attended enough to the juvenile tracts, &c. that have been published, to know how far they are calculated to answer the ends that I could wish to be had in view.



CCLXXV.

PHILOSOPHY, in the pride of the human pursuit of it, is made too independent of the dictates of religion, in treatises on education as well as other matters; but there can be no sound reasoning in which religion is not at least equally attended to. Indeed religion and sound philosophy must go hand in hand together; more than this, the second would never have gone at all, without the "*leading-strings*" of the other.



CCLXXVI.

I FIND that the "*surgere diluculo*" applies chiefly to my *thoughts*: if I were to speak from experience, I should

* Or at least their memories.

say that the evening is the time to read, and the morning to write : in both the mind is disengaged from other objects ; and in the latter, while the body is at rest, the mind rises, with renovated strength, to act for itself.



CCLXXVII.

ALL our enjoyments should have *communication* in view. How awful, and at the same time how delightful, is the thought, that we live for others, as well as for ourselves !



CCLXXVIII.

IF we do good with sincerity, I believe we shall do it almost without being conscious of it, and we shall gain the approbation of those around us, without being aware that we have deserved it : and in fact perhaps we have not,* for what more have we done, than follow our own inclination ? It is to *virtue* then, more than to the practiser of it, that the homage is paid ; and can the general disposition of mankind be placed in a more favorable light ?



CCLXXIX.

IN numeration, we do not begin *from one*, but *with one* : what then do we begin *from* ? *Nothing* : but what is nothing ? If *one* is an aggregate, it is from hence I suppose that the *retro-action* of numeration arises : but how are we to arrive at the nothing at which we set out ? Numeration then is infinite both ways.

* Or at least not their applause,

CCLXXX.

REGARDING the actual presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, it cannot surely by any strain of argument be maintained that it is evident to our senses; it cannot therefore be of the nature of human flesh and blood: of what nature then can it be, but a spiritual one? And in this sense the actual presence is admitted by the Church of England. In what then do the Romish and Protestant Churches differ in this point, but in the words they make use of? — words that, different as they are, can only be referred to one meaning. Yes, I will tell you in what they differ; in the degree of power they would arrogate to themselves; the Church of England follows as nearly as it can, the sense of the Scriptures;* the Romish Church chooses rather to adopt nonsense itself than to leave the use of common sense to its followers.

CCLXXXI.

IN a quotation from a work, entitled “a Key to the Chronology of the Hindoos,” in the Monthly Review for May, 1824, the Reviewers say (quoting from one of the Indian sastras) “Men are permitted to worship the Incomprehensible Spirit in any of his works, if they consider the supreme Omnipotent Intelligence as superior to them all.”

We must not allow ourselves to compare this with

* That is, with a reasonable interpretation,

our worship of the supreme Being *through* Jesus Christ, identified as the latter is with the former, in the doctrine of the Trinity : unless we consider the Indian tenet as an abuse or corruption of that doctrine, which indeed personifies the object of our worship in Christ, but at the same time separates the worship of the one supreme God from, and makes it incompatible with, that of any subordinate creature, however the latter may be excused by the ingenuity of human representations. The same *identification* surely cannot take place, nor be supposed, in that. Then let us not lower the dignity nor sully the purity of our faith, by such comparisons.*



CCLXXXII.

I HAVE just opened Mr. Wilberforce's "Practical View," where he ends a chapter with this quotation from Horace, his, no doubt, as every feeling man's favorite,

"Lucem redde tuam, dux bone patriæ !

"Instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus

"Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,

"Et soles melius nitent."

(How beautiful !)

Every word of Horace impresses its own sense, and that of the words in the context, with double force on the reader's mind. A poet who, like him, all pagan as he was,

* Surely the worship of the "lingam" may be considered as impure ; beyond the white washing of any reference or association ; and it is of some consequence at least, through what medium we worship the Supreme Being, if we will adopt our own personifications, instead of trusting to that code in which the perfection of moral evidence is comprised.

writes from a head so stored with reason,* and a heart so warmed with feeling, will afford quotations for a Christian philosopher, and almost texts for a Christian divine. “*Soles melius nitent*” puts us in mind of Akenside’s

“Thou better sun,
“For ever beamest on th’ enchanted heart,” &c.



CCLXXXIII.

A PETULANT Frenchman (and this petulance sometimes rises the highest amongst the beaux esprits of that country—moreover the Frenchman was *un homme de robe*, but not “*un Français de quarante ans*,”) has said in one of his works, “*qu’il savoit bien qu’il étoit très dangereux de tenter les hommes, mais qu’il ne savoit pas ce que c’étoit de tenter Dieu.*”

Might we not ask him (*très poliment sans doute*) whether a man who should presume too much on the favor and protection of the Being from whom he had taken but little pains to deserve it, and from whom, perhaps, he in fact but little expected it, and who should purposely place himself in a situation to want that protection, would not rather deserve his anger than his favor? To tempt God then, is to expect his favor by a pretended or overweening confidence in his goodness. To tempt God, is to commit an action which implies a distrust in his promises, by the trial we make of their truth. What can M. Servan think such conduct deserves?

* Not indeed evinced in the *flattering* application of these lines. But we must allow for the “fiction” of poetry, and the errors of paganism.



CCLXXXIV.

THERE are thoughts which, by being “magis ad nos,” must be always interesting to us. We do not therefore consider whether those which Shakespeare makes his dramatis personæ express are always suited to their characters or situations, because as they come home to all our “breasts and bosoms,” they must always meet with a welcome there.



CCLXXXV.

SINCERITY is so valuable a quality, that where there is an evident want of rectitude, there must I think be a want of that. The “humanum est errare” therefore should not be too liberally applied as an excuse for aberrations which no obliquity of mind, short of absolute insanity, will render excusable. And let us remember (if such a state of mind* will admit of it) that *self-delusion* is want of sincerity. What armour will guard us against this, but the Christian?



CCLXXXVI.

HE, who “from his throne beholds all the dwellers upon earth,”——yes, and upon the thousands, the millions perhaps of earths, that are contained in the universe——but how contained? Why, as making part of it. Part?——can infinity have *parts*? Can it be divided? Infinite divisibility then (if it cannot) should seem to be an error in terms. Alas! how inadequate is language to meta-

* That is, so self-deluding.

physical definitions ! * Man, man, what canst thou know ? Enough for thee, certainly ; but not enough for thy curiosity : then *repress* it.

POPE says, “ presume not God to scan.” But does not he in some measure scan, when he “ expatiates free” over what is far beyond his reach ? Beautiful indeed are his attempts ; but how far do they go ? No, the “ fly on the chariot wheel” is a very faint representation ; man has not even the comparative importance of a *fly*.



CCLXXXVII.

How much it must humble the pride of a man, who stands highest in the estimation of his fellow-creatures, to reflect how little of his title to it he really owes to himself. For by what are we governed but by our inclinations ? Happy for us, when the motives that influence our conduct proceed from a right source. But what is the merit that any one can claim to himself, when he compares it with that perfect model which he is enjoined to imitate ?



CCLXXXVIII.

SURELY we may say, that it is one great proof of the excellence and the divine origin of our religion, that it has given to the pride of man that lesson which it stood so much in need of.

* There is one use, certainly, in metaphysics : it shews us the impotence of our attempts to understand it. What we can know of it, however, has other uses, and these essential to philosophy.

CCLXXXIX.

THE motto to Mr. Greville's Maxims, is "strike, but hear me!" To be sure the reply to this will be, "But are you worth hearing?" I think he is, and that the merit of his maxims is such, on the whole, as may justify that consciousness which he must have had when he prefixed his motto to them. Those who dislike maxims must, I think, dislike the exercise of thought.

CCXC.

IT must be more than mere "verba et voces" that are sufficient "lenire dolorem:" though not always, neither, for Mr. Graves, in one of his novels, tells us of a sinner, whose wife, in opening at his desire the Common Prayer Book, happening to light on the "Act of Uniformity," read it through to him, and he declared himself to have been much comforted by it. So I have read of one who counted the number of words contained in the bible, and declared it to be the pleasantest employment he had ever had. Light must be the sorrows that are so allayed. To such persons, "words" must indeed be "things." Their thoughts, however, must have been *innocent*; and after all, not unconnected with more rational and serious objects.

CCXCI.

THERE are some persons (I hope not many) who throw away their own judgments so completely, as to suggest a

reasonable doubt whether they ever had any : such are those who affect to despise a thing that does not deserve it, merely because it happens to be out of fashion.

—o—

CCXCII.

KNOWLEDGE, like other edifices, may be built upon natural ground ; but a great deal of it is artificial, and (to use a vulgar phrase) it “ smells of the shop.”

—o—

CCXCIII.

WE may allow a man to be whimsical, if he will acknowledge himself to be so.

—o—

CCXCIV.

WHO, but our blessed Saviour, ever had a right to say, “ Learn of me,” &c. ?

—o—

CCXCV.

WHEN men indulge a habit of laughing too much at what they say themselves, it has this ill effect : they will either be thought to laugh at others (a sardonic grin) or at themselves, in their own applause ; to be either sarcastic or foolish. To be drily humorous, however, is no easy task.



CCXCVI.

THE occasional exhilaration of our spirits sometimes inclines us to say, "I am too happy:" does not this partly arise from our sense of the general imperfection of our happiness here and partly from that of the uncertainty of its duration?



CCXCVII.

WE know what we have—we know what we want—and we may presume upon what we shall have.



CCXCVIII.

IT has been observed that the middle classes of society are generally the purest, the most reasonable, and, we may add, the most interesting of all. This seems to answer to the text, in Proverbs, chap. xxx. ver. 8. "Give me neither poverty nor riches," &c. and to be a sort of "*aurea mediocritas*;" in which neither the "*obsoleti sordes tecti*," nor the "*invidenda aula*," are to be found. They are less vitiated by luxury and pride (for riches and prosperity are well known to harden the heart) and less debased by poverty and the vices incident to it. They have a plainness and frankness that make them more interesting, particularly in their misfortunes; for the rich and great have a certain *morgue*, a certain attention to state and etiquette, that makes them less communicative, less approachable, and that prevents their using that exercise of the *mind*

that shews itself in the middle classes (when they have minds to exercise) and which they chiefly depend upon in recommending themselves, and making their way in society. I think the want of these qualities shews itself in the higher classes, in an increasing proportion, till we arrive at the highest of all. These observations will apply to the common run of mankind (for the term "common" is confined to no one class) who have not those mental qualifications that raise them above their particular situation (whatever it may be) and that may be found equally in all situations, rising perhaps the highest in the highest classes; as the opportunities of excellence (at least what appears such to human eyes) are greater, in proportion to their greater responsibility in the use and application of them.

Elevation in rank and fortune both give opportunity for, and require higher attainments than can be expected in the lower classes of society; but the common imperfections of human nature, and the consequent abuses in education, &c. make the possession of them more rare: when possessed, they are valued accordingly.



CCXCIX.

GOODNESS of heart is not shewn so much in being free from all vices (for "*nemo vitis sine nascitur*") as in struggling with them: if this is not done in any degree, the character must be considered as an abandoned one. If the struggle is made only with a view to conceal the vices, it is at least an "homage which vice pays to virtue," the superiority of which she acknowledges in the homage she pays; and possibly this may be a step towards the practice of it. The conscious hypocrite cannot be satisfied with himself. His "fault" is not a "secret" one.

CCC.

THAT "many are called, but few chosen," seems to be evinced by the many obstacles there are to the attainment of those qualities that may be supposed to be required to make that "election sure : " the want of these* can only be supplied by the mercy of God ; and in our reference to that, we must indulge the hope, that those who are not *chosen* will not be "cast away."

CCCL.

THAT we are in the hands of God, every moment's reflection on his power, and our own weakness, must assure us of.

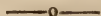
Life is full of disappointments : the best expectations may be frustrated, the best men may be subjected to persecutions, afflictions, and death. Is there no compensation for all this ?—no retribution required at the hands of justice, to re-establish *good* in its right, and to give it the predominance over *evil* ? O yes, there is ; it is to be found in religion, it is to be found in the hopes which Socrates, Plato, and Cicero suggested, and which Christianity has confirmed : it is to be found in that place where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

* It was probably the consciousness of that inherent imperfection and those wants, that made Bradford avow the insincerity ("hypocrisy" he called it) of his prayers, when he was on the point of justifying the sincerity of his religious faith by his martyrdom ; and if we do not make the necessary allowances for the universality of that imperfection, we shall go as far as he did, without having the same trial.



CCCII.

THAT the enjoyments of another state will be incomparably higher than any which we can have here, with the same congeniality of feeling that we have with the objects that best affect us here, a little reflection on those feelings will I think assure us of.



CCCIII.

To be released from the power of others, and to be in possession of that power themselves, is the great aim of those who dissent from the principles of the Government of the country in which they live. They preach liberty, and have despotism in view. They may disavow these designs, and may even be unconscious of them themselves; not being aware, that one mode of Government cannot be abolished without another, and that more violent and oppressive in proportion to the difficulty of overturning the established one, being substituted in its stead. They are also not aware how they themselves would be impelled by this necessity, and how the evil passions, to which they are liable in common with the rest of their fellow creatures, would be encouraged, and in a manner sanctioned by it; how "necessity" would become a "plea" for "tyranny." That they are not aware of these consequences, is probably owing to the influence of their passions: a little attention to the history of mankind, and even of their own times, might open their eyes.

What men are to their wives, their families, and their dependents, they would be, if they were under no restraints to the rest of their fellow creatures. By restraints, I

mean those of prudence ; those of principle will influence them at home as well as abroad.



CCCIV.

EQUAL, perhaps, is the danger to a State, from those who cannot or will not see the evil dispositions of others, and those who endeavour to conceal their own. Perhaps the danger is greater from the first ; for they are equally liable to be actuated by evil passions (let their present intentions be what they may), and what they will not see in others they will be equally blind to in themselves. They will not be restrained by the *caution* that the other conscientious but cunning knaves have, who did not begin by deceiving themselves.



CCCV.

“ HONESTY is the best policy,” certainly : but it is not merely from calculation that men are honest. Virtue has other sources than in self-interest. If it were not so, to what should we refer the sense of duty ? The very proneness to error (for certainly “ *humanum est errare*”) is a proof that men do not always act right from calculation. No, there are other impulses. The Author of all good, though he makes it arise out of evil, has not fixed its root in *corruption*.



CCCVI.

How much more severely should we judge of the
R

faults of others if we were not restrained by the sense of our own.

CCCVII.

THERE seems to have been a sense of moral excellence in the minds of the ancients, and of the necessity of its application to the interests and happiness of man : but they either, like their philosophers, made it an abstract theory, or, like Virgil, Horace, and other poets, attributed it to mere human characters. They wanted Christianity to direct their search aright, and the example of our Saviour to give them a model of the perfection they sought for.

CCCVIII.

THERE are people who will not allow any agency to Providence, because they cannot conceive its *modus agendi* : others, because they cannot see it, &c. But perhaps the greatest want in these cases is that of *feeling*. This is not excited till we have felt our own wants and imperfections.

CCCIX.

FEELING is the eye of the mind. There are objects which may be seen in a wrong point of view with it (and here it wants the assistance of reason), but without it they cannot be seen at all.

The eye of feeling wants the assistance of reason the more, as its own impulses on the mind are certainly more powerful. Another objection also lies against its un-

checked and undirected influence, which is, that to gain the concurrence of cooler minds, it will make concessions that, though they may be reconcileable to its own views, are not so to the clearer perceptions of reason. Thus an incoherent medley is made up, that will defeat the very object proposed to be answered. A farther explanation of this would perhaps lead to invidious details; the application therefore must be left to the reader.



CCCX.

ALL human events may no doubt be accounted for by natural causes; but these, though obvious in their application, were not the less unforeseen and unexpected. It is this that makes them so awful.



CCCXI.

HURRY of mind will not allow the thoughts to be *digested*; and without that process, what are they worth?



CCCXII.

MAXIMS, to be *terse*, generally leave something unsaid. How indeed is a complicated subject to be developed in a few words? Enough, however, if a maxim is a proper foundation to build upon.



CCCXIII.

So little comprehensive are maxims, that they generally give no more than *ex parte* evidence. “*Audienda est*

altera pars." The *part* that Rochefoucault has taken is certainly not the most favorable one. In ascribing men's actions to one motive, he leaves them unaccounted for by any.

CCCXIV.

THE character of a language may assist much in giving effect to the *plaisanteries* that are expressed in it. This is the case with the French, and it is perhaps no where more instanced than in Moliere. What can be more engaging than the sly simplicity and humour of his comedies? A scene in *L'Avare* I think will prove this. Moliere is far more amusing than Rochefoucault, and at least as instructive. Swift says—

“ Rochefoucault his maxims drew

“ From nature.”

But from what nature did he draw them? From such as Swift and he saw it. The character of the language that Rochefaucault and Moliere wrote in however, suits them both. What indeed cannot the French language and French Manners recommend? More, I am afraid, than ought to be desired. The French deal in *finesse*; John Bull in matters of fact: he states the fact as it is (giving now and then a little broad coloring to it); they refine upon it, but this refinement is only *fineering*; it does not penetrate the surface. As is the language, so is the character of the people. It is curious enough, that the French are more reasoners than thinkers. Do they put the cart before the horse in this? What say you, Master John?

CCCXV.

MOLIERE seems now and then (though rarely) to forget

that in indulging his own wit, he loses sight of the character and situation of his personages. Is this “*ad captandum vulgus*?”

Comedy should be the representative of human life and manners: when the writer makes it the mere vehicle of his wit, he gives it the character of *farce*. We may laugh at and admire the wit, but we cannot well approve the use made of it. It must be confessed, however, that Moliere has enlivened the hard and dry character of Harpagon with traits of humour that are suited to the character of the language. A *bon mot* never comes amiss to a Frenchman.



CCCXVI.

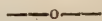
MRS. MONTAGUE has sufficiently ridiculed the turgid style of the French tragedies in her Criticism on the Cinna of Corneille; had Alfieri fallen under her observation, she would probably have done him more justice than he has met with from those who have said that in his tragedies it is always Alfieri that speaks, and not the persons of his dramas: surely nothing can be more appropriate to their characters and situations, or more impressive in their effects on the reader, than those in his Antigone, Polinice, Timoleone, Agamemnone, &c. in which I think the “*omne tulit punctum*” may be said of him, that is, all the “points” which dramatic writing requires. Mrs. Montague, with all her zeal for the reputation of Shakespeare, would not have made him a perfect model of tragic writing, as Alfieri’s critics seem to have done. Many of the speeches in Shakespeare’s tragedies in fact belong to any one else as much as to the person who utters them, and this is perhaps what recommends them. Alfieri’s trage-

dies, and Rossi's comedies, I think, deserve the study of the Italian language, as much as Don Quixote does that of the Spanish. There are probably few languages in which the original productions may not be read with an effect far superior to what any translation can give them.



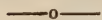
CCCXVII.

THERE may be (and no doubt is) a comparative goodness in human characters ; but how far does that go ?



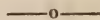
CCCXVIII.

THE same thought, if it is one of importance, will probably repeat its occurrence to our minds ; and perhaps exactly in the same manner and words : if the mode of occurrence and expression vary, so much the better for ourselves and those to whom we communicate it, for it will be more likely to make, and to have made, an impression.



CCCXIX.

HOW often do we see, in poetry, a subject treated on with better verses than it deserved ! Not quite so often perhaps as the converse of this. But when the poet and his subject meet, it must be “ for better or for worse.”



CCCXX.

WITHOUT religion, what would there be but negative reasons to reconcile us to death ?



CCCXXI.

WHAT sacrifice or what effort is too great to obtain peace of mind?



CCCXXII.

To determine, is too much for man to take upon him to do : neither the power he has over himself, nor over the object he has in view, will allow of it : that he is bent, nay resolved upon it, (*quoad in seipso est*) he may say ; but the determination he must leave to a higher power : “ Man proposes, God disposes : ” if man’s power extended farther, what a dreadful responsibility he might be subject to ! He may find some shelter, then, in his weakness.



CCCXXIII.

PEACE of mind seems to imply a degree of self-satisfaction ; is it then a compliment that we pay to ourselves ? When we are most angry with ourselves, it is perhaps our pride that is most offended. O pride and vanity, what Proteuses ye are ! and how are our feelings mixed ! What riddles we are ! Our want of power to estimate ourselves appears to be shewn in the mistaken preference given by some geniuses to works of theirs in which there had been the least display of excellence. This too is vanity, and perhaps a secret undervaluing of human attainments. Can we trust to such a guide ? The act of suicide is perhaps the impulse of pride (wounded pride ;) at least it implies a derangement of reason (that

intended controler of our passions,) as indeed does every deviation from rectitude. All may be referred to the influence of feeling, or rather passion. How much then is reason wanted ! The abysses of our minds are like those of the ocean, as our passions are like its waves.



CCCXXIV.

WE are sometimes so wrapt in ourselves, that we are deaf to the voices of those who express the greatest interest about us.



CCCXXV.

A MAN is sometimes obliged to be vain in his own defence, against the vanities of all around him. Thus Johnson called his “defensive pride.”* It is only before one Being that we can humble ourselves : if we do it before men, it is with reference to him. All but that is vanity.



CCCXXVI.

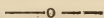
WHEN the mind is too intensely fixed on one object, it cannot clearly see any other ; or at least only through the medium of that which engrosses its attention. So religious enthusiasm may prevent our making a just estimation of the human mind or its works. My little book, “*odd*” as you may be thought, will you be *so* judged ?

* In his letter to Lord Chesterfield. — (See Boswell's Anecdotes of him.)



CCCXXVII.

A MAN who is much occupied with observation of his fellow-creatures, may be called a *by-stander* in life. How many *blots* may he see, that have never been *hit* ! Let him however look to his own *tables*.



CCCXXVIII.

FROM what God *can* do, we may presume upon what he *will* do : for his other attributes must equal his power : *pari passu* incedunt.

But in our conclusions from this, we must lose sight of none of his attributes.



CCCXXIX.

THE duty that we pay to society, and to our situation in it, we pay to God : What we cannot pay, we should not undertake ; for that is an engagement of our responsibility ; and even our *intentions* will not acquit us.



CCCXXX.

THE necessity of our separating spirit from its gross companion matter, is an acknowledgment of its independent existence. What idea can the materialists form of the Supreme Being ? If “ God is a Spirit,” why not other spirits ? If nothing is impossible to him, and nothing

conceivable* by us, why not an union, which we cannot conceive, of body and spirit? Silly reasoners, who apply their measures to things to them immeasurable! These "stretches of human brain" may be ingenious, but what knowledge do they reach to?

—o—

CCCXXXI.

A STATEMENT of doubt is only a statement of ignorance. Should not this make us regulate our doubts?

—o—

CCCXXXII.

To form analogies, we should have some knowledge of both subjects.

—o—

CCCXXXIII.

"BE thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength; so will we sing and praise thy power."

What ideas of power and might can go higher, or be more sublimely expressed? The superior strength and expression of prose over poetry (modern poetry at least) is no where more shewn than in the Psalms: in such passages, too, as "With thee is the well of life, and in thy light shall we see light."—Psalm xxxvi. What can be more comprehensive, more expressive, or more sublime than this?

The effect of poetry is more upon the ear than upon the mind. To give poetry beauty, it must have amplification, it must have what depends more upon the imagination than the judgment. What has Pope added to the Lord's prayer?

* Or at least intelligible.

—o—

CCCXXXIV.

How apt we are, in the names and epithets we give to things, to display our want of true taste ! Simplicity (expressive simplicity) is surely the test of it : but in lieu of that, we substitute unmeaning tawdriness. Our ancestors were more wise ; their appellations, therefore (where they are not gross) ought to be preserved. What we have gained in delicacy, we have lost in strength.

—o—

CCCXXXV.

If “ more ” was not meant “ than meets the ear,” there would often be little addressed to the *mind*.

—o—

CCCXXXVI.

“ EVEN so ”—are we aware how much is expressed by that phrase when we utter it ? More perhaps than what it may immediately allude to ; for the mind often adverts to other objects, So are ideas associated.

—o—

CCCXXXVII.

“ IL y a des hochets pour tout age.”

“ Beads and prayer-books are the toys of age.”

THIS may be true, Messieurs Fontenelle and Pope ; but after all, it is only taking human nature in one point of

view : it is only true then in part, and such is the general description of *wit*.

Wits, when they write for the world, “ know their men.” Do they know *themselves* and their *subjects* as well ?



CCCXXXVIII.

IN making ornamental buildings, &c. we are apt to be fond of a white color. Is it that we admire that *purity* in them which we feel the want of in ourselves ?



CCCXXXIX.

OUR best feelings, particularly those which *love* excites, cannot but be connected with our best interests. The desire that two persons who really love each other, and who are joined together by that marriage bond which alone can suit and sanctify such love, feel to be more closely united than the separation of bodies will admit of (*Honi soit qui mal y pense*) may not unreasonably be considered as being excited by the prospect of that union of souls, that “ everlasting entenderment” that will take place in another world. I will say more : this desire can never really take place unless it is excited by a feeling which is far above all sensuality. The mixture of it with that (or at least the predominance of that) is as great a debasement as ever took place in the personifications of pagan idolatry. But even this had its lucid intervals. The fable of “ *Sal-macis and Hermaphroditus*” was I believe founded in the idea I started with : at least it is the corrected and purified interpretation of it ; and that of *Eros and Anteros* (on which I have before remarked) as well as other parts of the

mythology of the ancients, may be considered as allegories of the same kind. When the corruption of literal interpretation takes place, the allegory is lost sight of. Horace might well exclaim, "*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*" (I am afraid he has not always a right to do this;) but poets should consider that it is the "*profanum vulgus*" that want admonition: the initiated* stand in no need of it.

Let not my reader's delicacy be offended at this; for surely it is by such chains of thought that our "*reins are chastened in the night season*:" and let him, who thinks of the virtues and the mental charms of her whom he presses to his bosom, her who for years perhaps has shared with him the joys and sorrows of life, "*doubting*" the one, and "*half-expelling*" the other, and who has advanced so far with him on their journey to that place where their union and their "*entenderment*" will be "*for ever*"—let him know how to appreciate these feelings; and let not my reader blame those open expressions of them, but rather let him share with me those of which I wish him to partake.

—o—

CCCXL.

WITH all the ardent desires of the human mind, what must be the state of that mind in which there is no hope of their fulfilment?

—o—

CCCLXI.

CHRISTIANITY has softened manners, certainly; but it has not yet united hearts; indeed if it had, it would have anticipated the happiness of another world: and how? To cease when most enjoyed.

* Or rather, the self-corrected.

CCCXLII.

IT is fortunate for the reasonable part of society, that those of both sexes whose acquaintance is the least desirable, generally take care to *mark* themselves by going into the excess of the fashion; as men, in the size and shape of their whiskers, &c.; and women,——but *that* ground is too delicate to be trod upon: indeed it is a field where there are various ways of losing one's self. I would advise those young persons who are more led away by the example of others than induced by their own inclinations, to get rid of those *badges of a bad sect*, lest they should incur the sentence of the proverb, “*Noscuntur a sociis.*”

CCCXLIII.

WHAT is of the most importance we are apt sometimes to treat the most lightly: this may be said of the faults that we observe in ourselves and in others; we notice them from duty, and we do it lightly from complaisance. I am afraid that it is not altogether from a regard to justice that we now and then speak ill in their absence of those to whom we have been very civil in their presence.

CCCXLIV.

CONSCIOUSNESS and Timidity are the natural consequences of mental defects, and even immoralities; and these may be discoverable even under the best (or rather worst) faces that in such circumstances we can put on: it

is only a sincere (*nil conscire sibi*," &c.) and well grounded self-satisfaction that can give a *proper* assurance.

CCCXLV.

THERE is such a selfishness in our nature, that we are apt to make our views of religious duty in some degree subservient to our mental enjoyment. Thus we carry our ideas of *resignation* so far as to divest ourselves of the common feelings and anxieties of life.* But this may be in part constitutional. True resignation prepares us for, and will soon improve itself into gratitude.

CCCXLVI.

LET us take what interest we may in any book we read (and those who can talk interestingly will probably write so,) that interest will not be complete unless it applies immediately to our own case. We shall still want the "*quod magis ad nos pertinet*." Nor is this *selfishness*; for what is our own case, is the case of us all, or may be so.

CCCXLVII.

NATURE never deceives us; if she pleases at the first impression, she is pretty sure to improve on a reviewal: it is not so with *art*,† whose best aim is to imitate nature. Her success in this determines her claim to our attention.

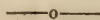
* This has an allusion to "Quietism."

† I mean only as art.



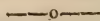
CCCXLVIII.

IF it was not an apparently irreverent expression, I should say that it was wonderful what *play-things* have been given to man: yet why irreverent or inappropriate? for what are men but *children*? Grown children they may be; but what state of *adolescence* do they arrive at?



CCCXLIX.

THE passage "through things temporal" is most assuredly "unto things eternal;" be they good, be they evil.



CCCL.

"In ourselves dwelleth no good thing."
Perhaps so: at least many *evil* things dwell there.



CCCLI.

MAN only, unforgiving man, is sometimes "extreme to mark what is done amiss."



CCCLII.

WHAT, and from whence, are the strings of that heart, which vibrate so when they are touched.

 CCCLIII.

FEELING is both excited and excites.

CCCLIV.

WHEN we observe the countenances and manners of others, we shall see the marks of one common feeling (when it is not obscured or perverted by the passions) which is independent of any difference of mental ability. Surely this is the most favorable aspect of human nature. It is a true *fellow-feeling*.

CCCLV.

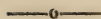
WELL may Pope say—

“ Though man’s a fool, yet God is wise.”

In nothing, perhaps, is the influence of God’s wisdom over man’s folly more displayed, than in the manner in which the human passions are made to counteract each other.

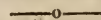
CCCLVI.

IF there were no stimulus but the sense of duty to make us stem the torrent of life’s troubles and of our own propensities, we should hardly do it without the additional stimuli of our own passions, ambition, &c. How necessary then are they! but how dangerous, when not controuled by reason!



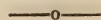
CCCLVII.

THE general effects of particular passions we know ; but in what manner they operate in individuals we are totally ignorant of. He only knows that, “to whom all hearts are open.”



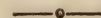
CCCLVIII.

WHO shall judge others? For who can tell what, or how much, has been “given” to each individual?



CCCLIX.

THOUGHTLESSNESS is the resource of those who do not or will not feel; religion of those who do.



CCCLX.

WHAT we have most to guard against is our pride ; but our object should be, not to destroy, but to subdue and regulate it; to make it subservient, not predominant ; for it may be a very good servant, but it certainly will be a very bad master ; indeed we cannot destroy it, for if we do in one shape, it will break out and shew itself in another ; “Fortunam expellas furca” &c. and with the more effect, as we shall then no longer know it, but mistake it for *humility*. Our first business is to know it in all its bearings, and to treat it accordingly.

 CCCLXI.

CONSCIOUSNESS of our own abilities may be as apt to mislead us as the applause bestowed on them by others.

CCCLXII.

WE ought to listen to the voice of reason, but how often are we deaf to it, or at least imperfectly swayed by it ! A time will surely come, when its power will prevail, for it was not given in vain ; how much more will it *then* tell us ! But in what voice ?

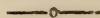
CCCLXIII.

SUCH opinions as the Deists hold, neither will admit of a trust in God's mercy, nor fear of his power. The Calvinist runs into the opposite extreme to them. According to him, nothing is *meditated*, every thing having been premeditated. Both leave man without an expectation from, and consequently without reliance on, his Maker.

What matters it then, whether we are Deists or Calvinists ? The Calvinist may (perhaps must) have his fears and his hopes ; but both are at variance with his religious opinions ; according to these, God has already determined his fate, and cannot be moved by his prayers.

Calvinism, I think, affords a proof that we should not attempt to explain what is above our comprehension, as the prescience of God certainly is ; nor always to reconcile apparent contradictions. In removing one difficulty (as we imagine,) we fall into much greater ; into difficulties that would appal any but a Calvinist.

God "will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy :"
it is *future* determinations that he reserves to himself : he
will have mercy, but the Calvinist will not allow it. "His
heart," however, "gives the sceptic (or dogmatist) in his
head the lie."



CCCLXIV.

IF we look around us, we may find few that are worthy to be "chosen;" but we shall also find few (still fewer it may be) that are out of the reach of God's mercy; so at least we may hope.



CCCLXV.

SECTARIANS are unreasonable in various ways : what shall we say to those who give the opprobrious name of "the *Devil's* pipes" to the organ? *—to that almost divine instrument, whose effects Milton hardly over-rates when he says that it

"Dissolves the soul in extasies,

"And brings all heaven before our eyes."

The spirit of opposition can hardly shew itself more strongly than in this instance. But what lengths will not

* What do they say to the trumpets, "the lute and harp, the strings and pipe, the well-tuned and loud cymbals," &c. with which the Israelites are exhorted (Psalm cl. &c., to "praise God in his holiness?" O man, man, art thou not ashamed of thyself?

sectarian malevolence go to? Happily, however, there are many among them who “o’er all this edge of *spleen*” are influenced by gentler feelings; by something of the “milk of human kindness.” They, no doubt, are ashamed of the unfeeling folly of their brother sectarists.



CCCLXVI.

THERE are many who take up their opinions without having been incited by any previous doubt to the examination of the subject on which they have formed them. They have no idea that conviction can be the result of of such a process. These can hardly be ranked among the *thinkers*. But what is curious is, that those who so take up their opinions, are often the most obstinate in adhering to them, without very well knowing why. These then can hardly be ranked among the *reasonable*. Instead of having “proved all things,” they have not even proved what they have adopted. Neither the one nor the other of these *rational* beings seem to understand what doubt is: they jump at once from perfect ignorance to perfect certitude, or what they take for such. They can hardly say “my heart became the convert of my head.”



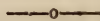
CCCLXVII.

WE are often readier to acknowledge a fact than to draw the proper conclusions from it. Is this from want of power or want of will?



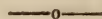
CCCLXVIII.

WHEN Lord Bacon formed his “*novum organum*,” could he see more than the errors of the *vetus*? could he foresee the abuses that might be made of his discoveries? No, as we can only judge “*a posteriori*,” we can only look “*ad posteriora*,” (rather *ad priora*—true, Mr. Grammarian)—forwards we cannot look : we must wait for experience.



CCCLXIX.

To judge of combinations, the mind must combine in itself more than it can contain. I mean, where the combinations are many and intricate.



CCCLXX.

COMMON sense is more equal to judge of systems (human systems I mean) than it is to form them ; indeed if it was not so, Bacon, &c. would have written to very little purpose.



CCCLXXI.

I think we may find now and then the “*poeta loquitur*” in Shakespeare : the ancients would have made it come from the Chorus. Is this an argument in favor of their plays?

—o—

CCCLXXII.

THE four cardinal virtues are closely united together, and inseparable from each other. Without fortitude, temperance, and prudence, we cannot lay claim to justice, which latter indeed includes them all, and extends also to the virtues of charity and humility, without which we cannot be *just* either to our Maker, our fellow-creatures, or ourselves.

—o—

CCCLXXIII.

LET us hope that those who have injured us, and who were taken away before they could injure us still more, and encourage others to follow their steps, have now no other feeling or recollection of this, than what excites them to thank God for their having been taken away so soon; and let those who remain on earth, cherish in themselves feelings correspondent to that.

Lapse of time, change of situation, and succession of events, are the great substitutes for the want of human placability. If our own feelings improve with the progress of these, the work is completed and confirmed.

—o—

CCCLXXIV.

THE desires of man are insatiable, and the incentives given to him to the practice of virtue seem to be adapted to those desires; for as he can never satisfy himself with the

acquisition of riches, honours, &c. so he can never acquire virtue enough to give him that satisfaction which his mind is capable of, or at least which it wants. But the discontent that is felt in these cases is of a very different kind : in the latter, the desire of increase is stimulated by far other feelings than by what it is in the former. Envy loses all its poison when its object is the imitation of virtue. *Love* is the produce of that, *hatred* of the other.



CCCLXXV.

IN the doctrines of Christianity, as much has been delivered for the examination and satisfaction of our reason, as in reason could be required ; and as little left for the trial of our faith, as was necessary for that trial. Let those who waver (for I speak not to the confirmed Christian or the Infidel) fully and fairly consider this.



CCCLXXVI.

THOSE who argue against the authenticity of the Bible (like the Jewish Rabbi, who called Moses “a cunning fellow,”) found their arguments upon the Bible itself, which is so far an acknowledgment of its genuineness. In the same book, (1 Sam. xii. 17.) after his address to the people, Samuel calls upon the Lord to bring thunder and rain ; which he did. Was Samuel *a cunning fellow too* ? Let us then either receive or reject the whole, for it must either stand or fall together.

—o—

CCCLXXVII.

Is it not a proof of our incapacity to judge of a complicated whole, that we are obliged to have some one or more striking parts of it set before us, to determine our opinion?

—o—

CCCLXXVIII.

PERHAPS there cannot be full feeling without full comprehension; we must be content with our measure of it here, and not expect or fancy it to be fuller than our nature admits of. If we do, the surplus must either be an adulteration or chaff.

—o—

CCCLXXIX.

RELIGIOUS opinion, whether Pagan, Hindoo, Mahometan, &c. seems to be the opposition of one system to another, and that, without any appeal to reason; for if they were examined at her bar, what comparison would any of them bear with Christianity?

—o—

CCCLXXX.

THE fears of man are in proportion to his weakness, and to his ignorance; and the only refuge he has against them is in supreme knowledge, goodness and power: if, in contempt of these, he trusts to his own resources, he will soon find what "broken reeds" they are.



CCCLXXXI.

THAT there are particular visitations and protections, I think is evident from the 91st Psalm, as well as from other parts of the Scriptures; and as all causes and their effects must be in the hands of Almighty power, we may well suppose that they cannot all be left to what we call the common course of things; if it were so, there would be no retribution here, nor would there be any room for God's dealing with men; we should leave nothing to him but the Epicurean's "*securum agere ævum.*"



CCCLXXXII.

ALL that we can understand is in favor of our belief of a Supreme Being; shall our ignorance be made a plea against it? Of what are we not ignorant? In what does not our reason assure us that there is much more than our senses (the only vehicles of information) can inform us of? If we believe in a Supreme Being, can we suppose that he would permit such excellence as was exhibited in the person and character of Christ, and such sufferings as he endured, such "*works*" as he performed, to be made the vehicle of a falsehood? For Christ said that he was "*the Son of God,*" and "*the bread of life that came down from heaven;*" what then hinders our acknowledgment of his divinity in both? Our prejudices that we will not reject, and our pride that we will not humble, even at the bar of our reason, which we pervert so as to make it an accomplice with our pride.



CCCLXXXIII.

“I AM the bread of life;”* “I am the living bread which came down from Heaven.”—(St. John vi.)

What can the Unitarians oppose to this? If they adduce passages which make for their opinions, they should surely also pay attention to those which make against them. And which are the strongest and clearest?

“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.”—(Same Chapter.)

Is not this decisive against the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation? Would our Saviour have what made “profiteth nothing,” a vehicle for what *profiteth every thing*?



CCCLXXXIV.

WE are apt in religious matters to require a greater degree of conviction than our minds are capable of receiving; if conviction were complete, there would be no room for faith; and conviction cannot be complete unless intelligence were complete also. Without faith,† man could believe nothing, for he can perfectly understand

* If we are to believe, with the Rōman Catholics, that the bread of the Sacrament is not bread, but the actual body of Christ, we have the same reason (literal acceptance) to believe that in this passage Christ meant that his body was not a body, but actual bread. But the fact is, that what Christ will not have us believe, the Church of Rome will. The Unitarian indeed will neither accept the literal nor the metaphorical sense of the passage.

† Faith in our senses.

nothing. If knowledge were perfect, man would have nothing to learn, and consequently nothing to stimulate his powers ; it is sufficient if he has what will direct their action, and authorize their conclusions.



CCCLXXXV.

THERE are no doubt many things that puzzle us in the Bible, but those that are plain far outweigh them, and the whole forms a body of such strength as makes ample amends for the weakness (if it may be so called) of particular parts. The 18th chapter of the 1st book of Kings is of itself more than sufficient to do all this.

If any justification was wanting of the declaration of God in the second commandment, that he is “ a jealous God,” we have only to consider, what would be the probable consequences of all mankind being left at liberty to believe in him or not as they pleased, and what would be the state to which their ignorance, or any information given them without an absolute injunction accompanying it, or, still worse, what the influence of their passions would lead them to, and what it actually did lead all the nations who were not so enlightened to ; and then we must acknowledge, that such a declaration, and so enforced, was as necessary to the well-being of mankind, as to the maintenance of the true religion on which that well-being so much depends ; and we shall see how futile as well as impious are the objections raised by Voltaire and his associates in infidelity, against that declaration, as being indicative of a passion belonging only to the basest feelings of human nature.



CCCLXXXVI.

IF we consider, (what our reflections will soon inform us of) how thanks and praise must go together in religious feelings, we shall understand what it is to give "glory to God," and to "thank him for that glory." And how closely does that connect us, his creatures, with him !



CCCLXXXVII.

If man was made "in the image of his Maker," and "a little lower than the angels," could it be to level him with the beasts that perish ?

See what we must reject and what we must admit, in rejecting the immortality of the soul.



CCCLXXXVIII.

What shall relieve, what shall rescue, the mind that is plunged into the depth of distress, grief, lamentation, and almost of despair, but the prospect and hope of futurity ?



CCCLXXXIX.

"To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God," are three precepts, which, if required to their utmost extent, would be impossible for man to fulfil; and at the same time no one can deny the excellence of them, or the necessity of that fulfilment, to fit

us for the state of perfect happiness which must require perfection* to enjoy it, and which we hope for in another world: for it is not the ferocious valour of the Scandinavian, nor the occasional and often capricious generosity of an Alexander, a Cæsar, or any other admired hero (and the only real hero is the Christian martyr); it is not in short any virtue founded on pride or vanity (those Proteuses) that can fit us for that state, for which only the mercy of God, in accepting the humble confessions of our unworthiness, and our imperfect endeavours to render ourselves less unworthy, can raise us to.

Let those who are unwilling to lower the pride of their courage or the splendour of their fame to this humble level, recollect the speech of the "godlike Turenne" to Louis XIV. that "he wished to put some interval between the life of a soldier and his death."



CCCXC.

THOSE will be the most ready to attend to every address that is made to them, whose minds are the most capable of containing a variety of thoughts.



CCCXCI.

THAT difference in size is really nothing, seems to be evinced by the axiom, "*nusquam Deus major est, quam in minimis,*" as well as by the consideration, that the power to produce any part or the whole, must be equal. And

* Perfection which will be given hereafter.

what is all comparative size when compared (if it could be compared) with infinity ?

—o—

CCCXCII.

IT is hard to say whether the spirit of rivalry among men does more harm or good, necessary as it is in the present state of human nature. Till that nature is changed, the spirit of rivalry, and the practice of duelling which it begets, must probably both subsist: for while this earth is inferior to heaven, the “signs” of that inferiority must remain. Nothing but decided subordination will keep us in awe; and it is happy for us when the same awe that is felt by servants of their masters, is felt by us of that Being, who is the common Master of us all. There is indeed in some (happy if it were in more) a good nature that counteracts the wrathful passions; and well is it that our nature has any thing good in it at all.

—o—

CCCXCIII.

“THE sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his wings.” How exquisitely beautiful! “Healing,” what? All the wounds of life.

—o—

CCCXCIV.

A MAN who goes on in the same tone of elevation or expression of voice or manner, &c. (be he young or old) especially if it is not countenanced by good sense, cannot I think be actuated by *mental* impulses; though he may by vanity or animal spirits.



CCCXCV.

THE custom which I have observed among the common people in country churches (particularly in my own parish church of Masham) of bowing the head at the repetition of the verse in the "Venite exultemus," "O come, let us worship and fall down, and *kneel* before the Lord our Maker," and similar passages, seems to me to be a very proper one: for such a reverence is as much called for in the pronounciation of what expresses an act of adoration, as of a name (that of Christ) to which it is determined that adoration shall be paid. In both cases it is due.



CCCXCVI.

GOOD sense and a certain pliability of mind, where reason applies her hand, are nearly allied. Obstinacy is folly or any other synonym of folly.



CCCXCVII.

August 1, 1824.

THE text in the sermon of to-day, from the 6th chapter, 8th verse of the prophet Micah, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good," demonstrates how much man is the object of God's peculiar regard. He has "created him in his own image," he has "made him a little lower than the angels," and has given him powers of feeling and expressing adoration and gratitude, and (O wonderful

act!) his only Son, part indeed of himself, came down from heaven, to take the nature of man upon him, that he might raise the fallen creature to that state for which he was born.* Incomprehensible as the latter act of divine goodness is, it is attested by evidence too strong not to be believed. To these reasons however for adoration and gratitude, in the sermon I have heard to-day, is superadded that of *interest*, as distinct from the inducements of *reason*; which is a separation that appears to me to be altogether improper, and indeed absurd: for what could reason say, if it had not interest to plead? or what expectation could there be that man would listen to it, if he had not an interest in doing it? Without that, he would have no motive to act from. It would indeed place him on a level with his Maker; for the highest idea perhaps that we can have of the divine goodness towards man is, that it has no interest to excite it, which motive can only act upon a subordinate and dependent creature, such as man is.

In the afternoon we went to hear an excellent sermon, preached by the Rev. Mr. Burrill, curate of Masham, to above one hundred children of the national and other schools of the parish. The sight of such a congregation is the more affecting, as it reminds us of what we ourselves were, and represents to us what we hope to be, as we are told we shall be, in Heaven.

—o—

CCCXCVIII.

A MEASURE is given to life, and an existence to time,

* To Pope's "born but to die," he should have added, "*and to live again.*"

of which that measure is formed, and which is itself measured by years, months, days, &c. Time is then made by and for the material world, and they have a co-existence together: to the world of *spirits* both are as nothing; *their* eternal existence no more depends on the revolving periods of years, months, and "days," of which our life is "numbered," than infinity can be divided into parts: they are absorbed in the contemplation of one great Object, or in the sense of the privation of that contemplation; — they can have no expectation of future good or evil, nor the hope or fear that it produces; their fate is determined by the present (always present) state in which they are; for this, life, and the time of which it consists, is a preparation and a school; and this appears to constitute the use and the value of time.

The metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls into other bodies, is surely an absurd system, begotten by ignorance and mistaken conclusion, as it makes spirits dependent on matter, as not being able to exist without it, as the supposition of the infinity of the material world also makes the existence of spirit depend on that of matter: and even God himself would be, what Spinosism makes him, only the soul of that material world, as the soul of man is, for a time, the animating part of his earthly existence. His passage from that into another is but a separation of these (the one dependent, the other independent) to be followed by an existence, eternal as is the Being who gave it.



CCCXCIX.

SHALL we lay no stress on the truth of those opinions and those feelings which afford the only comfort at the hour of death?

It is feeling that requires comfort: hardness of heart requires none, nor would admit of it, not being made of "penetrable stuff." It is reserved perhaps for pain that cannot be comforted.



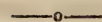
CCCC.

THE existence of a purgatory state is one of the perhaps few opinions of the Romish church for which much can be said. Being "beaten with stripes," "few or many," seems to imply a purpose of *correction* which is incompatible with eternal punishment. The rejection of this was probably occasioned by the determination of the Reformers (in their opposition to the Romish church) to adhere strictly to the letter (and spirit, as far as they could understand it) of the New Testament, and not to deviate from it, nor to extend it to any implications or inferences that might be made from any of the texts that did not contain a direct precept.



CCCCI.

THERE are some, who are so strongly prejudiced in favor of, or against an opinion, that they will not hear the least objection to or argument in favor of what they approve or disapprove of. With them, all such arguments as are opposed to their own opinion are totally unworthy of divine or human toleration: "laudandum" or "tollendum" is their motto. They are exempt from the "humanum est errare," and their opponents are gone far beyond it.



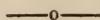
CCCCII.

ILL habits that will not yield to railery are incorrigible; but as ill habits are generally contracted by following bad examples, it may be hoped that the substitution of good examples and advice will correct them, as indeed it generally will, where there is good sense to work upon.



CCCCIII.

OUR observation of the general imperfections (to call them by their lightest name) of human nature, may, if this observation and the conclusions we draw from it are not carried too far, afford as reasonable a ground of hope and trust in the mercy of God (when applied to ourselves and our title to it) as any that we can form from the best endeavours we can make to deserve it; nay more, if we consider how imperfect those endeavours must be.



CCCCIV.

Swinton Park, Aug. 12, 1824.

AFTER a series of various and changeable weather, we are at length come to that which is best fitted for the great purpose of the season, the ripening of the corn, of which there is a promise of an abundant harvest; and all the previous weather we have had, anxious and uncertain as it has made the mind of man, has been a preparation for it. Well may we therefore exclaim with Thompson—

“How good the God of harvest is to us!”

The autumn is every way fitted for the purposes which it is made to answer : it ripens the fruit, it softens the solar heat which had brought that fruit so near to maturity,

———“attemper’d suns arise,

“Sweet-beam’d,” &c.

and it is a prelude to the approach of winter, for which the gradual decay of nature prepares us—emblem as it is of the winter of our lives ; in doing this, it inspires a seriousness that approaches to melancholy, but a melancholy of the most delightful kind, that brings tears into our eyes, which we may hope are the tears of “virtue.” It is the season of calmness, of tenderness, of sympathy, of melancholy, and of consolation : it is worthy of all that Thomson, in his “Autumn,” has said of it and its effects : effects which

———“the power

Of philosophic melancholy,”

and still more that of

“Devotion rais’d to rapture,” &c.

so strongly produce in the mind. Happy for us, if these and similar dispositions are generated by it, even before our own season of

———“sober autumn, fading into age,”

“Ere pale concluding winter comes at last,

“And shuts the scene :” ———

shuts it here, to open it in “another and a better world.”

—o—

CCCCV.

THOSE who prefer ruder and more untaught poets of nature to Thomson, appear to me to betray a want of taste in themselves for what is really sublime. Their

ideas of nature seem to be like those of the poets whom they admire. If there is sentiment, it is a sentiment of a lower kind, unelevated by others that are congenial with it. Thomson's imagination may sometimes have carried his descriptions into what has been called "tawdriness," but they are still inspired by sentiment. For this, consult his "Autumn," and his "Winter."



CCCCVI.

WHAT a deal of trouble do some people save, or think they save to themselves, by never examining their opinions? But are they not sometimes disappointed in this, by the vacancy they feel in their minds? This may give them a trouble of another kind. Which will you prefer, reader? Perhaps whichever you have chosen.



CCCCVII.

AN abstract idea of sentiment may have betrayed and ruined many a poor girl, who thought she saw in her lover the workings of a feeling which her charms and her mental qualities had raised for a time, only to sink afterwards into its own native brutality and depravity.



CCCCVIII.

THE more of sentiment there is in connubial fondness, the higher it will rise.

CCCCIX.

SATIRE, or observations upon human imperfections, should, as Jacques's "taxing" did—

————— "like a wild goose fly,
Unclaimed of any man."

For thus, it must have no marked personality;* and then, the stronger it is, the more unwilling will be the individual to "claim it"—to "put on the cap that fits him;" as he will disgrace himself the more in his own and others' estimation. If the satire is evidently personal, it will be ascribed to personal motives. Besides, we are precluded by a higher authority from personal "judgment," as we are from any thing that may injure our "neighbour." This would not be "heaping coals of fire on his head." No, leave him to his own feeling, or to others' opinion of his running into the vices or follies which your satire reprobates.

CCCCX.

WHEREVER any fatal catastrophe has happened, we cannot help forming in our minds a connexion between the place and the event, which, as our reason will soon tell us, cannot really subsist. Our superstitious feelings, however, make us even suppose that the connexion is still kept up, and the place revisited by the spirits of those who

* We may observe of satire that it is apt to destroy its own force, by overshooting the mark, as Pope sometimes did in his "Timon," &c.

suffered in it; spirits which are now as little connected with the place, as they are with the beings and the forms under which they suffered in it. Thus it is that we cannot disengage ourselves from the ties that chain us to that temporary existence that we now enjoy, nor see through the veil that hides from us the future existence which, with the eye of reason and faith alone, we are enabled to look forward to. As our reasoning faculty is by far the noblest that we possess, we must consider that as the basis on which our faith is built; and that whatever influence it may have on our feelings, must be, when properly regulated, to refine, elevate, and correct them. Without the aid of reason, they would be no more than what we enjoy in common with the brutes.

“Self-love still nearer as its object’s nigh;

“Reasons’ at distance, and in prospect lie.”



CCCCXI.

IN the Scriptures, there is an awful mysteriousness, mixed with a simplicity of narration that renders them still more awful and impressive, which, added to the habit we have lived in, of considering them as the object of our highest reverence, in some measure deters us from examining them by the rules of common criticism. If we attempt to do this, we shall find in the facts related in them, and in the general character and conduct of the Jewish nation, great proofs of cruelty, and of every kind of immorality. It cannot however be denied, that they were the only people on earth who had the knowledge of the true God, and who, by the divine communications that were made to them, were exempted from that general idolatry (however prone they shewed themselves to fall into it) which was spread

over the rest of the world, and which, if the Jews had not been set apart in their exemption from it, would have possessed it (some philosophical minds perhaps excepted) wholly. Why the Jews should have been so selected, or how to account for the opposition of their character, manners, &c. to those feelings and habits which we might justly expect to result from the cultivation of true religion, and the practice it inculcates, is indeed a difficult matter, though not more difficult than to account for that general proneness in our nature to evil, which requires a more than human power to counteract it. It appears to have been reserved to Christianity to give the feelings and habits above-mentioned their full force (as much at least as the condition and circumstances of human nature admit of) and to impress upon the minds of men the necessity of following that course of life, and of cultivating in themselves those dispositions of which we find the perfect example in our blessed Saviour, and in him alone.

What should we reject, in rejecting the Bible? and what could we find as a substitute for it? Let us ask ourselves, and seriously consider, these two questions. A truly well disposed mind will make the best of the knowledge it has, and wait in humble suspense for more.

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CCCCXII.

THE language of the Psalms may I think be called a desultory and artless but earnest expression of feeling, accompanied with the sublimest ideas and images, which cannot be surpassed by any conceptions that the human mind can form. Many of the passages in them are obscure in their application, and they vary from an expression of self-

humiliation, to the apparent indulgence of a vindictive spirit, sanctioned indeed by a concern for the honor of God, which is in a manner identified with the feelings and interests of the Psalmist himself. The general strain of devotion, trust and resignation that runs through them, must make them both respectable and highly interesting, though they may sometimes want the interest which they would have in our minds, if they were more immediately addressed to our own particular cases and feelings, which indeed many parts of them are, and as such must be understood and sympathised in by every rightly disposed mind. Their general connection with the great object of the Scriptures, and particularly those parts of them which are decidedly applicable to our Saviour, must give them the highest title to our reverence, and must unite them with all our devotional feelings, and with all the hopes which they inspire.

What is most impressive, and most interesting (if I may use that term) in the Psalms, must, I apprehend, be what is most applicable to our own case and feelings: and the more general that application is, the more we shall probably be struck with it; especially as we must take our share in it in common with the rest of mankind; and the share that each individual takes in it will depend upon the sense he has of his own weakness and unworthiness. What, therefore is more proper to awaken that sense in us, than the reading those compositions? or to refer us to the source from whence our best consolation must be derived? To that then let the "broken and contrite heart" address itself.

The Object to which the Psalms are addressed is so sacred and so exalted, and the addresses themselves are so earnest and so evidently proceed from the warmest feelings of the heart, that they supersede all criticism that may be made upon the mode or language in which they are expressed: nay, that warmth of feeling itself accounts suffi-

ciently for any neglect there may be of correctness of expression, or of attention to any thing in which the heart is not immediately concerned. Of the heart indeed, they may be considered as the spontaneous effusions. What is most intelligible and most conspicuous in the Psalms, is the piety which they express; though the mode of that expression is sometimes obscure, and the transitions are abrupt.

Psalm xxxiv. v. 18. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit."

So indeed we may well hope and trust; but who is he that answers these descriptions? Is human pride so easily conquered? By adversity it may.

The most impressive passages in the Psalms are (of course) those that are of the most general application;—

"O tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong, and put thou thy trust in the Lord." (Psalm xxvii. 16.)

This is of universal application, and therefore must be universally interesting: and if of immediate application (as it also may be) it must be still more so.

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CCCCXIII.

I KNOW not whether the "light heart" &c. that "goes through the world my brave boys," is to be envied or not; but this I know, that some thought, and serious thought too, is necessary to enjoy the pleasures as well as to feel the pains of life, to say nothing of its duties; and the "burden" of the song seems to exclude feeling as well as thought, which I think is pretty decisive against the adoption of its maxim; we may, therefore, fairly estimate it at the value of an "old song." Such songs, indeed, are made chiefly for the gaiety, and sometimes the intoxication of

the moment: but they are also the confessions of the reverse that the succeeding moment may bring; for *care* will "call again to-morrow," however we may be "now to mirth [inclined]." "*Nunc vino tentas, nunc cantu pellere curam: Frustra,*" &c.

Music, however, and gay music too, may have its turn, and we may allow (with Mrs. Chapone, I think) that

"Since life is no more than a passage at best,

"Let's strew the way over with flowers,"

is at least an "agreeable absurdity." Besides, (if my reader will allow me to go on with these "old songs" "*nec lusisse pudet*") we should not with our Reverends, Venerables, Very Reverends, Right Reverends, and Most Reverends, enjoy the sublime airs of Handel at the Ancient Concerts, if we did not interpose (which they indeed are restricted in doing) lighter and gayer strains, to feel,

"What passions cannot music raise and quell."

What extent shall we give to these transitions? All but the indulgence of downright immoralities; these we will leave to Bacchanalians and Anacreontics.



CCCCXIV.

THE heart that will contract at the pressure of sorrow, will also expand at the lighter touch of joy: both are proofs of its sensibility. What thanks then have we not to render to the Power who has given us these mixed and alternate sensations, to enable and incite us to enjoy the pleasures, and to perform the duties of life?



CCCCXV.

The obstinacy and the irresolution of men (both owing

to their weakness and ignorance, not knowing what to change or what to adhere to) creates equal difficulty in the management of public affairs, at least in critical times. When matters go on in their usual train, there are not the same trials. This may be seen in the Reformation, in the time of Henry VIII. and the Rebellion, in that of Charles I. How much of history is seen through the medium of prejudice ! and at the times when men's passions are heated, how violent those prejudices are !

How much opportunity is given to excuse the conduct of Sovereigns, by their acting through the medium of *Agents* and *Ministers*, and sheltering themselves under what is imputed to them ! This excuse, however, has its limits ; and a Sovereign has generally his private propensities, as well as his privy purse. For the use and exercise of these then he is responsible to God, and not to man.



CCCCXVI.

IN reading the Church service, such a stress should be laid on each word as may make the proper impression : and such a time should be given to the pronounciation of it as may allow that impression to take place.



CCCCXVII.

IN the economy of Nature, there is no superfluity nor deficiency : or if there is an appearance of either, it is only to shew the greatness of the scale on which Nature works, in comparison with the littleness of man ; and she makes it up by the average of years which she takes. We should

therefore consider her works, (those of her great Author) upon that scale, both in the physical and the moral world; and we should conclude, that when he afflicts the sons of men, he does it with the design of giving them useful lessons, of correcting or punishing their faults, and of teaching them their dependence on him, which they are so apt to forget.



CCCCXVIII.

NOTHING can shew more strongly the peculiar and inscrutable ways by which Providence works its own ends, nothing can shew more strongly the futility of human reasoning and expectation, than the taking of Ipsara by the Turks, now (August, 1824) announced in the public papers: It will of course depress, or at least check, the sanguine hopes of the Greeks, and raise the depressed ones of the Turks; but the probable consequence will be (if we may venture to conjecture) to protract the contest, and make it more bloody, and that it will end in the final ruin of the Turks, who will accelerate and aggravate it by the confidence and pride which this event will inspire them with, and which they do not appear to have sufficient means of supporting.



CCCCXIX.

DETACHED thoughts seem to me to be the best, if not the only way of portraying the human mind, and this must be done by itself: it must be an autograph: and it is only the portrait of the moment, at which it is taken, that perhaps of the humour of the moment, which is ever varying, as our spirits or incitements vary: there are

generally however some leading features which give the same tone to all the portraits, and will make them resemble each other. Shakespeare makes "each man act many parts," but they succeed and interchange with each other more quickly than he makes them do, with subordination however to the main businesses of life, which are more or less important and influential, according to the station and character of the individual.

CCCCXX.

WE are so apt to think favorably of ourselves, that our conviction of the rectitude of some of our sentiments or opinions serves us as a kind of voucher for that of others which might not stand the test of a stricter examination. By this means, trouble is saved, and satisfaction (such as it is) gained; at the expence, however, of truth; and our real improvement is at least retarded. The most decisive result of self-examination is self-distrust.

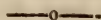
CCCCXXI.

THE intercourse of society creates both the resemblance and the difference of the individuals who compose it.

CCCCXXII.

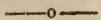
MEN are so much alike at all times, that it is hardly possible the same thoughts should not occur: the expression alone of them will vary; and this we take for

novelty. So men change their appearances as they change their dresses: a little more or less finery. In morals, however, every man should be his own tailor; but he must work after a model, some few *originals* excepted.



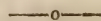
CCCCXXIII.

THINGS may be viewed in such different lights, that it is possible we may be thought to contradict ourselves, when we really do not.



CCCCXXIV.

A MAN who thinks strongly may sometimes create an image in his own mind, that is too strong for him to deal with. He must then take refuge behind a paradox, or puzzle or amuse his adversary by some play of his imagination, involving him in the smoke which he has raised himself. Have I done this with you, reader?



CCCCXXV.

WHAT useful substitutes are words, when we do but half understand a thing! And has not this been the case with many geniuses, as well as dunces? Have they not wrote "about it, goddess, and about it"? Who makes most smoke perhaps succeeds the best. "Ex fumo lucem," however, sometimes.

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CCCCXXVI.

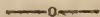
MEN who are rationally liberal, of whatever rank they are, will feel that they are but men, and will shew their sense of that equality, with proper reservations, in their behaviour towards their fellow-creatures. But there are some, who having a predilection for those of their own rank, and seeking their society accordingly, make distinctions which ought not to be made between gentlemen in their social intercourse with one another. This disposition is too apt to be encouraged by those who are fond of the society of their superiors in rank, and who are, I believe, still known by the name of "Quality binders." This of course creates a jealousy in those who value their own independence, though they have not the same advantages of rank or title, or perhaps of fortune, which is the silver ticket of society: and thus the sentiment of liberality, and even in some degree of urbanity, is precluded on both sides; or at least a shyness and unwillingness to associate is produced: but this cannot take place where real good sense is possessed. The only qualities required by that, are those which itself possesses.

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CCCCXXVII.

I WILL not say that the world is made up of cunning, but I will say that there is a great deal of cunning in the world. Part of it, however (I hope the better part,) may be called defensive cunning; and this is the more necessary, as without it the knavish part of the world might be more than a match for the foolish. The sense of this necessity makes people, whether foolish or not, disbelieve

what they hear related of simplicity of character, which they attribute to the credulity of the relater, not considering that they allow at least one instance of simplicity in *him* ; till their own experience has convinced these self-defenders (as far as they are open to conviction) that the account they had heard was true.



CCCCXXVIII.

ONE way to know ourselves, is by observing the manner in which others receive what we say to them, and then comparing it with what we think of ourselves, and perhaps drawing a medium between them : or if both should be favorable or unfavorable, comparing it with the dictates of our reason.



CCCCXXIX.

WE are the less able to judge of others, and still less of the world in general, as we are apt to be more struck with, and even to generalise, what is bad in it.



CCCCXXX.

HUMANITY is the first of virtues ; and “*homo sum ; nihil humani a me alienum puto*” is a most excellent maxim ; but humanity should be tempered by judgment ; for when the same lenity is shewn to imprudence, or even to the indulgence of vicious habits, that is due to unavoidable misfortune, or to accidental error, instead of doing any real good to the individual we shew it to, we only encourage his faults, and aggravate the distress that we wish to relieve,

besides the example and encouragement we give to others ; till at last we are forced to use that severity, which if exercised sooner, and perhaps in a smaller degree, would have been the greatest humanity we could shew.

To give to those who are connected with or depend upon us, timely notice, by our conduct and what we may say to them, of what they may expect from us if they deserve it, is the best service that we can do both to them and to ourselves.



CCCCXXI.

WHEN people argue upon abstruse subjects (and the most abstruse are often the most interesting*) they are apt to lose sight of that with which they professedly set out, by having their attention fixed on the medium through which they view it; and as each views it through a different medium (which may be seen in the actions as well as in the reasoning of men) they fancy themselves in opposition to each other, and go on disputing till their attention is recalled to their principal object, by something that has an immediate relation to it. †



CCCCXXII.

THINGS are so connected with each other, and the transitions are so easy, that it is difficult to get others to reason closely, or even to do it ourselves, however we may intend it.

* As are the mysteries of religion.

† This I think may be observed in metaphysical disquisitions.

CCCCXXXIII.

GOOD, as a positive term, can have, as our Saviour observes, but one application : all others are merely comparative.

The life of man is a succession of business, of pleasure, of usefulness, of trifles, of seriousness, of vanity, &c. The life of one, and of one alone, was entirely spent in "doing good," in every shape that it can be done.

CCCCXXXIV.

THE line of honesty is so differently drawn by different persons, that one would be led to think that there was an honesty in the abstract. Practical honesty, however, in the strictest sense, will always be the object of him who wishes to settle a just account with himself.

CCCCXXXV.

WE may sometimes preclude ourselves from fixing an opinion, by carrying our reasoning upon it too far ; as we may also fall into an erroneous one by not carrying it far enough.

CCCCXXXVI.

IF we always attempt to do all the good that we imagine we can do, we shall often be likely to do a great deal of harm.

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CCCCXXXVII.

THE desire of a constant and general intercourse with society must proceed either from an indifference in the choice of our companions, or from a philanthropy that rises above all discrimination, and includes all descriptions; or from inability to find resources within ourselves, or to bear the trials of solitude. If it arises from other motives, as vanity, interest, &c. they must be mixed with and supported by one of these.

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CCCCXXXVIII.

THERE is a general level among mankind, which is only raised or depressed by the different qualities and dispositions that place some above, and others below, their fellow creatures.

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CCCCXXXIX.

SUCH is the disposition of mankind, that one difference of humour, opinion, &c. is more likely to set them at variance with each other, than twenty similarities are to reconcile them.

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CCCCXL.

THERE are probably few who are admirers both of Sir

Walter Scott's and Crabbe's poetry; certainly very few, if any, who are equal admirers of them. The variety, the romantic wildness and imagination, and even the careless freedom of the former, charm many readers; while the correctness and truth of the latter, however interestingly and forcibly represented,* attract but a few. Sir Walter Scott recommends himself by the ease with which, in his poems and novels, "late qui splendeat unus et alter assuitur pannus." And this the more, as none of his readers are called upon to put the *panni* upon themselves, unless they chuse it. But Crabbe's *panni* (a term which I suppose the polished reader would think more applicable to *his* figures) are more fitted to human nature in its unsophisticated, and perhaps in its unimproved state, than we like to see it dressed in: he holds up a mirror in which we cannot bear to view ourselves, nor even that part of the world which lives in a state that the other part may wish to turn their eyes from, or only to lend the glance of pity or assistance now and then to, without taking any further part in it themselves. For this reason, we like to look at such representations (highly as they are finished) in the Dutch, or in Wilkie's pictures, better than to see them described in a manner that brings them more home to ourselves. This perhaps is the more to be observed in those who have lived in the higher classes of society, and especially who have been used to dangle at the skirts of the highest. Can "unus et alter" of these "panni" be put on occasionally, without sticking too close to us? I am afraid not.

* His representations, however, sometimes exceed the truth: such is the force of imagination, and of the desire to make an impression; and when did not Poetry overcharge her pictures?



CCCCXLI.

WE are apt to attribute particular opinions, or defences of those opinions, and authorities from which their's are derived, to the professional prejudices or interests of the persons who entertain or defend them; forgetting that their profession has given them opportunity, and made it a duty for them to examine those opinions and authorities, more than we ourselves are likely to have done. It is therefore incumbent upon us to allow a greater weight to their opinions on subjects which are immediately connected with their profession, if they support them with reasonable and sufficient arguments, although we may not give implicit credit to them, which indeed we are not called upon to do.

If we are not perfectly sure of the solidity of our own opinions, we may be the less disposed to pay a deference to those of others, however high their reputation may stand: but have we not both our reason and our feelings to guide us in the examination of them? And for what else were our reason and our feelings given to us?



CCCCXLII.

How often does solemnity or formality of manner cover vacuity of thought! It may be a shield too against many painful feelings which thought excites. But is it not a bar to the access of many pleasurable ones? Still more, if pain lurks behind it. And who shall tell what may lurk there? But it does not accord with our present humour, and we like it not.



CCCCXLIII.

THE kindness of Nature has made what is most beautiful, most common ; though we, her capricious children, prize only what is rare, whether beautiful or not. However, we (those at least who are alive to her charms) may be said to enjoy the general view of them, though we neglect particular objects. But the more we attend to them, the more we shall admire them : for the mind has the power of sharpening again the blunted edge of enjoyment : and let not the proud philosopher nor the dissipated worldling call this Reason's second childhood.



CCCCXLIV.

THE love of novelty is so strong in us, that it pervades even our devotional inclinations ; for I believe it has led astray many an unsettled Christian. We have not the patience to wait for novelty, till we can have the only real enjoyment of it—at our entrance into another world.



CCCCXLV.

HE who is in the habit of examining his own mind, will find it the source of some pain, but much pleasure also ; for it will open to him its secret stores, and enable him to improve what is good, and purge it of what deserves not to be kept there.

CCCCXLVI.

WE are perhaps less meritorious in following a right path than the Ancients were, when they did it without having Christianity to point it out to them; and we are certainly more culpable when we leave that guide, to follow a wrong one.

CCCCXLVII.

THE imprecations in the Psalms, apparently vindictive as they are, are considered by Divines as being prophetic, and as referable only to the punishment which God will inflict upon sinners; and there are doubtless many reasons in favor of this opinion: but there is such a strong appearance of their proceeding from the circumstances of David's own case, and they accord so much with the whole of it, that we may be at least excusable in attributing them to the feelings which that excited in him. All this however may require a fuller, and consequently fairer, examination; an examination in which our *jealousy* should be cast aside.

CCCCXLVIII.

A MISTAKEN tenderness may be some excuse for our being indulgent to those whom nature and parental affinity have placed under our care: but we should consider that the selfish indulgence of our own indolent habits is no addition to, but rather a diminution of the force of this excuse

and that we are laying up a store of incalculable mischief both to our children and ourselves, however good their dispositions may be, and the worse indeed on that account : for both they and we ourselves will be sure to feel severely the ill effects of our misconduct. We may complain of their want of disposition, and even of capacity to improve ; but have we tried all the proper means of overcoming the one, or supplying the other ? Have we, in short, begun with ourselves ?



CCCCXLIX.

WE should be careful not to mistake the possession of talents, or their occasional exhibition, for the full use of them. We may be apt to pay ourselves too cheaply ; for it is to ourselves that the first account at least will be rendered. And while the “ day ” lasts, we are told that it is never too late to make it up. But certainly the sooner we begin to do it, the better, for “ procrastination ” may be continued while “ year after year rolls on, till all are fled.” But let me first apply this to myself ; for *sanandus et ego sum*.



CCCCL.

HAVE I not said before, that one of our dangers (and that perhaps not the least, for we may suffer by it in both worlds) is, in our being too well spoken of by others ? And this not improbably is meant by the strong text of Scripture,

“Cursed is he of whom all men speak well !” * This danger most probably originates in our making the “praise of men” our first object : how soon then ought we to be taught to prefer that “of God !”



CCCCLI.

WE are never perfectly content with others, perhaps because we are never perfectly content with ourselves. Some we think too light, others too grave, &c. But there are few who have not some good qualities ; and the best thing we can do, is to let them see that we value those, and disapprove of, at the same time that we excuse, as far as we can justly, the faults or defects that are mixed with them. In doing this we must necessarily draw our observations from personal examples, otherwise they would neither be so useful, nor perhaps any way applicable : suffice it, if we name no one (for then “our taxing, like a wild goose flies, unclaimed of any man,”) nor approach too near in description : justice then may have its free exercise, and cannot be too strict, for it is not the punishment but the correction of men that is aimed at. Those, however, who have any sensibility about them, ought not to be stung to desperation.



CCCCLII.

REFLECTIONS occur to us the more readily as we see generally things in the same light, and have been prepared

* What is here precisely meant by “cursed” ?

by experience to make them ; we judge of them from our own biasses, which have generally the same inclination. Thus we are *mannerists*, in judging, as in painting, writing, &c. Our humours indeed may differ more than our judgments.



CCCCLIII.

THE uniformity of each man's character makes the variety that exists among different individuals : and the tie of one common interest prevents that variety from interfering with the maintenance of that uniformity in each individual.



CCCCLIV.

Two great objects seem to be had in view by the Author of nature ; one, to fill his creation with life (and consequently with the enjoyment of what goes to such an astonishing extent below our powers of vision ;) the other, to prevent that abundance from interfering with the enjoyment of the different beings who compose it. For this, it was probably necessary that they should prey upon each other, both in a living and dead state, as we see various animals do. How the sensations of fear and pain, which this must produce in living animals, are modified or made consistent with enjoyment, we cannot tell ; perhaps in great measure by the privation of *mind*, which in us so much aggravates the sense of pain or fear. The latter seems to extend no farther in animals than is necessary for self preservation. A fact, which I remember, may be considered either as an exception to, or exemplification of this. A sportsman

had winged a snipe, which consequently fell to the ground, when a sparrow-hawk appeared immediately hovering over it; the poor snipe uttered the most piercing cries, as conscious of its inability to escape from its natural enemy; but this situation it was put into by the hand of *man*, who, when he approached to take up his prey, probably did not give such alarm to the poor animal.



CCCCLV.

THOSE who have never known what it is to be melancholy, can never have truly known what it is to rejoice; for feeling is essential to both.



CCCCLVI.

WHEN hyperbole is carried too far, it becomes nonsense, and instead of its adding to the force of what we would express, all expression is lost in absurdity. So it is, when addressing ourselves to the Deity, we say—

“ Eternity’s too short,

“ To utter all thy praise :”

Forgetting that eternity is the utmost limit (if eternity could have limits) that we can assign to the duration of any being whatever; and that in thus under-rating that duration, we under-rate the very majesty of Deity itself. Why will we thus misuse the common sense that he has given us, in straining it beyond its powers? Why should we not rather acknowledge the power of feeling over reason in

calling upon "expressive silence" to "muse his praise?" All beyond this must be "ad captandos insanos." Shall we be afraid of judging these lofty subjects by the rules of common sense? If we are, let us not attempt to judge of them at all. For if we attempt to fly higher than common sense will carry us, it must be with Icarus's wings.



CCCCLVII.

"Os homini sublime dedit cœlumque tueri

"Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."

O LUCRETIVS, it is to be hoped, that notwithstanding your imperfect endowments as a heathen, and your abuse of those very endowments, you now derive some benefit from the use you have here made of your talent; that it is something in your favour to have taught your fellow creatures, the sons of men, to think and to express themselves as you here have done. But you would not have so expressed yourself, had not you yourself been taught.* What return did you make? Who can tell? We Christians may have gained in feeling, and it is to be hoped in the conduct of our lives; but it does not appear that we have gained in expression. The Heathens had one common master with us.



CCCCLVIII.

EXPRESSION is the clothing of thought; its reception with the world depends as much upon this, as a man's does upon the coat he wears.

* Taught, in this instance, by a superior Power..

 CCCCLIX.

OUR vanity shews itself even in our gratitude to our Maker, for we must feel the internal advantages he gives us, to be grateful for them. Thus vanity leads to its proper end, and its proper corrective. It was not then "given in vain."

 CCCCLX.

CANNOT we admonish our fellow creatures against following an example which we disapprove of, without condemning the individual who set it? Must we personify vice, to make it odious? Is not its own mien frightful enough?

 CCCCLXI.

HE alone is free who voluntarily acts as reason dictates.

 CCCCLXII.

FALSE compassion is the greatest cruelty; for it encourages the false pretences under which that compassion was gained: instead of relieving, its ruins.

 CCCCLXIII.

IN appreciating the Psalms, or any other part of the

Scriptures, we should be careful not to trust too much to our own powers of judging what may be above our comprehension, or even adverse to our opinion or feelings, but when it is sanctioned by its association with the rest of the sacred books.



CCCCLXIV.

THIS life being as nothing in comparison with eternity, it appears that under certain circumstances the Supreme Being considers it as nothing himself, both with respect to its duration, and to what attends it during that. Its ultimate end is a preparation for the life to come; and God only knows when that preparation is complete, or what is necessary to complete it. We sorrow here; but how soon may our "sorrow be turned into joy!"

All evil must be compensated. The sufferings therefore of man, as they exceed those of beasts, must have higher compensations; and their height must be equal to what the desires of man aspire to. His conceptions, we are told, they will be far beyond. But the other demands of justice must be satisfied, as well as this: the general satisfaction has been made by our Redeemer: the rest must be fulfilled, as he has enjoined, by each individual.



CCCCLXV.

THE opinion of Plato was, that all things were created; that of Aristotle that they have existed from all eternity: the first is the system of revealed religion, and probably was derived from it; the second, the suggestion of unenlight-

ened reason : we have only to consider the superiority of the religion which has been revealed to us over Spinosism, to judge of the truth of the former, and of the necessity of a revelation, to impart a knowledge which all the acuteness of Aristotle could not supply him with. The reason of man could go no farther than to make of the Supreme Being a mere Governor of an universe already made to his hands. Who made it, and who appointed the Governor ?

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CCCCLXVI.

WE are so eager to obtain positive information and that too from the evidence of our senses, (which even then we should hardly believe) that we are not satisfied with the equally certain knowledge that negative proof will give us. We are so desirous of knowing what, and even how things are, that we will not form our conclusions of what they are from the conviction of what they cannot be : nay, we pay no regard to all indirect, all presumptive evidence, in our search after a knowledge which we cannot obtain, and which, if obtained, would unfit us for the situation we are in. Should not this make us distrust our judgments, and remain at least in that humble suspense which will finally lead to knowledge ?

—o—

CCCCLXVII.

IT should seem that the pride and ambition of man will not allow him to form his conclusions a minoribus ad majora. We see how he grasps at every thing. Has not his indolence too a share in this ? Make it worth my while to take the trouble, says he.



CCCCLXVIII.

THE imperfect ideas that we form may make us wish for more; and the manner in which they suggest themselves to us may make us afraid of losing them by a more laborious and circuitous mode of acquirement. In the very attempt to arrest them, they are gone, and we fly to *sense* to supply their place.*



CCCCLXIX.

THE necessity of making some figure in the world may be an excuse for the mistaken means we sometimes take of making a great one: the best preservative against this is no doubt the knowledge of ourselves.



CCCCLXX.

THE recollection of those who have come to a sudden and violent death (self-inflicted,) and whom we thought worthy of a better fate, and were interested in, may sometimes come *across* our minds (expressive phrase!) and give us a sensation of grief, anxiety, and uncertainty for their fate in another world, which can only be relieved by our reference to the mercies of that Being whose laws they have violated in thus disengaging themselves from

* All ideas must be suggested by the occasions which present them. Newton probably would not have thought of his theory of gravitation, had it not been for the apple which he threw up. But it is not every one that can follow an idea like Newton.

their responsibility to fulfil them. Their excuse for it must be in what instigated them to it: perhaps it has been the last means which Satan has been permitted to take, to secure them to himself. Their previous conduct may not allow this to be an excuse.



CCCCLXXI.

SUICIDE is certainly not the necessary effect of cowardice (as it has been said to be) which has various and sometimes opposite ways of shewing itself. A distinction may also be made between moral and physical courage. Fortitude and a right frame of mind are certainly great securities against the commission of suicide, to which we see that circumstances in life, and even the mere *tædium vitæ*, without any external cause, or any apparent derangement of intellect, will sometimes impel its victims: but the most effectual security against it is in *religion* (which indeed a “right frame of mind” implies) and the sense of its duties and its prospects: with these in view, all temptations to suicide will shrink into nothing. If our existence is given us (and certainly we did not give it to ourselves) it must be that we shall perform the duties* of it: the refusal to do this (which is implied in the act of suicide) is as great an act of disobedience as we can commit: what then can we expect after it, but the dreadful sentence, “Depart from me, for I know ye not,” &c.?



CCCCLXXII.

A SOI-DISANT Philosopher once said to me, that

* Cicero, in the “*Somnium Scipionis*,” has given us in a few but impressive words, the same reasons against suicide.

"scepticism was the only rational religion:" (in fact it is no religion at all.) The obvious answer was, yes, for those who wish to attain a knowledge that they are not capable of: those who reflect how little they can know, will be satisfied with a lesser degree of information; such as has been given.

CCCCLXXIII.

IF we do not raise our ideas higher than this life, we shall not only be incapable of adding to or improving our enjoyments, but we shall lose all relish for those we have; tired and dissatisfied as we must be with all our present enjoyments that do not lead to the expectation of something still higher, which alone can give any value to them; for they do but whet our appetite for more.

CCCCLXXIV.

WE associate, we converse with, we amuse, and we comfort (sometimes indeed we quarrel with) each other, but all this does but excite a wish for something more satisfactory, which we feel most when we are alone—when our passions do not take the place of our natural desires: when we are alone, they are fixed on their proper object. If two people or more meet, who have the same object in view, that attention will be increased in proportion. Tell me, ye who are satiated with the pleasures or the ambitions of life, is it not so?

CCCCLXXV.

THE only authority that we have for considering any part of the Psalms as prophetic, is where they are cited

in the New Testament by our Saviour or any of his Apostles: an authority which is amply sufficient to stamp them as such. But to consider the imprecatory passages in the same light, would I think be to confound the case of David with that of our Saviour, and would justify, if not necessitate, our referring all his confessions of unworthiness, &c. to the same object. This would surely be to raise the character of David at the expence of that of our Saviour. The sentiments which the former expresses in the Psalms are agreeable to what we know of David's character, and he would hardly scruple to deliver the same in public, as to be sung, &c. that he expressed in his private devotions, unless he made distinctions which would have impeached the sincerity of his feelings. It pleased God to make him an instrument to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, as it did to make the Jewish nation, with all their unworthiness, an instrument for the preservation of the true religion upon earth, and if David was the "man after God's own heart," it must surely have been in what best qualified him to be that instrument. As our Saviour was to be born of David's family, it is natural to suppose that the latter would have a consequence given him proportionate to that distinction, and to what entitled him to it, without our expecting that he would be as free from all human frailties as our Saviour himself was, which certainly was not the case.

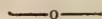


CCCCXLVI.

I THINK we must suppose that the feelings of David, from a view of his own case, were mixed with a prophetic view of what was to happen afterwards, of which he was in a manner himself unconscious; for we cannot suppose that he, and Abraham, who "saw the day" of Christ, and "was

glad" of it, saw also the whole series of events connected with it. What they saw was by inspiration, which is superior to and independent of the operations of reason, and would probably be given in a degree and manner suited to answer its purpose, without any reference to the deductions of reason, which had it been left to them,* would in all probability have carried its desire of knowledge further. I do not see how we are to account for David's suggestions, without this mixture, unless we are to suppose that he was no longer what he had been, and what he was at the time he delivered them, which a reference to his history by no means authorises.

If our reason is appealed to for the belief of miracles, it must have something to do in the contemplation of those human events through the medium of which those miracles were accomplished : indeed in all beyond that it still must have its share of action.



CCCCLXXVII.

The swifts (*hirundo apus*) leave this country the first week in August ; the old swallows probably about the end of that month, leaving the young ones (which we may distinguish by their assembling in numbers about buildings, &c.) to gain strength for their migration, and to feed upon the insects that yet remain in the atmosphere, and of which the quantity probably diminishes from the time of the swifts' departure. The old swallows go first to the sea-coast, where the number of insects probably is greater.

Thus every thing is arranged by a wise and bountiful Providence, for the subsistence and enjoyment of its creatures.

* To its own deductions.

As to the migration of birds, there can I think be little or no doubt about it, unable as we are to conceive that of the small and apparently weak-winged tribes of the Fly-Catchers. Their distance of flight is probably proportioned to their strength.*



CCCCLXXVIII.

So much has been allowed to us (all probably that we are capable of availing ourselves of) in evidence of the existence of an acting or superintending Providence, that we may well suppose that something would be reserved for that lesser demonstration that we are capable of receiving of things above the intelligence of our senses. And what regard may not man presume to have been given to himself, when so much is given to the creatures below him!



CCCCLXXIX.

NOTHING will secure the inviolability of the marriage ties but mutual love. For this we engage at the altar, and therefore the obligation to it is equal on both sides. Where this exists, there is no fear that principle will give way to passion, for both are engaged in their adherence to one object, the attention to which will render our observance of St. Paul's precepts an inclination as well as a duty. Mutual love will supersede or at least render of no consequence all little bickerings or ill humours, for the mutual

* Other observations might probably be made of the martins and sand-martins, for which I have not had opportunity.

esteem in which it must be founded, will rise superior to and outweigh them all. This should be one great object of the attention of parents in the education of their children; and that attention, without any immediate reference to this object, will best be shewn in their inculcating in them the observance of all the other duties of life; for they all, as well as all that constitutes human happiness, are comprised in that state in which man ceases "to be alone," and woman to want a *support*.



CCCCLXXX.

WHEN a vain man listens with deference to what you say, he pays you the greater compliment, as it is a deduction from the credit he assumes to himself. I beg his pardon, however; he will still take care to do himself ample justice in what he reserves to his own account; and perhaps he will make himself amends for the superiority he allows to you, by what he assumes over some other man in company, whom he has not equal reason to respect. You see the workings of his vanity in both.

When a vain person has any thing to communicate, he generally does it so as to make it appear that he thinks the other obliged to him for the knowledge of what would not otherwise have occurred to him: perhaps however he is only afraid that he should not have credit given him for that knowledge, unless he took it to himself. In that case, he only wishes to be on equal terms with the person to whom he addresses himself.

Different situations in life make but little difference in the dispositions which men shew themselves to be actuated by, though they may make a great deal in their manner of exhibiting them: indeed if it was not for

this, we should hardly know whether a man had been bred in a court or a cottage.

Whatever a man's disposition is, there will be some manifestation of it, however it may be modified by the circumstances in which he is placed.



CCCCLXXXI.

WHEN we consider what may be allowed *for a time*, we should not forget what will (or rather must) happen *in time*, when a state of maturity succeeds to the growth we are now witnessing. Shall I be thought trifling when I say that the thinning of my own plantations* suggested this thought to me? Will it not apply to more important concerns?

But what indeed is more important, in a national point of view, than all that is connected with the great source of our power, the navy? And how is speculation confounded when it looks to the future means of supporting it! How vain does it make the "*esto perpetua*" appear! But where indeed are we to look for stability except in the hopes that raise us above this earth, and all its concerns?

* The rapid consumption of timber (rapid in comparison with its growth) must be a subject of anxious speculation, with all the ingenuity that is exercised to eke out what remains. In the management of plantations, the necessity of the slow growth of the trees, to ensure their increase in size, durability, &c. should be one great consideration, and should check our wish to see it accelerated, by their drawing each other up, &c. during the short term of our natural lives.



CCCCCLXXXII.

How irrevocably would the mind of man be lost in contemplating the innumerable stars that bespangle the canopy of heaven, if it had not the Being to refer to who created them, and man himself, and all above and all below him, all being the creatures of one great Creator!



CCCCCLXXXIII.

WHEN the wild expanse of the moors,* rising and spreading to the eye, great as nature there appears, gives such enlargement to the mind, how infinitely greater must the enlargement be, which the expanse of the universe will afford, to faculties then made capable of enjoying it!

The romantic and beautiful valley too, that I look down upon, no less declares the presence of him who made it: of him who is

“To us invisible, or dimly seen

“In these his lowest works; yet these declare

“His goodness beyond thought, and power divine.”

But a sudden change intervenes: the atmosphere darkens, the thunder rolls, peal after peal, and tells us in its awful voice that if the God of nature is to be adored in his sunshine, he is no less to be adored in his storms.

What language can describe the effect of the artillery of heaven, when it bursts over our heads, and fills the whole vault around us? Thomson, of all the poets, has best

* The Western Moorlands of the Vale of York.

done this ; and ends his sublime description with this pathetic address : —

“ Shall man, so soon forgetful of the hand
 “ That hush’d the thunder, and serenest the sky,
 “ Extinguished feel that spark the tempest wak’d,
 “ That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
 “ Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears ?”

Arnagill Head, Sept. 2, 1824.

—o—

CCCCLXXXIV.

LET us pray for nothing but what God shall please to grant.

—o—

CCCCLXXXV.

If the weakness of mankind exposes them to the temptations of vice, it is generally of some use in preventing their vices from being carried to excess ; for it is rare to see that degree of boldness that will overleap all dangers. Example and association will indeed lessen their fears of these ; but this creates a new danger, in rendering them more obnoxious to society, and more liable to discovery by the jealousy it raises among themselves ; for there can be no confidence amongst *evil-doers*. The “divide et impera” needs not to be practiced towards them; for the seeds of division are already sown. If their vices make it necessary for them to seclude themselves from society, there is the less danger of its suffering by them, and while men are sensible that it is their interest to be virtuous, vice is less likely to be predominant. Thus a thinking people will ever have the advantage over a light one. It is when God permits their minds to be darkened, that their hearts become hardened.

The vanity of mankind is a check upon their vices, for it must be supported by the applause we receive from others ; and this will not be given to vice. Let us not quarrel with our frailties, till we are sure that the harm they do overpowers the good. Vanity has probably had its share in the greatest good, as well as the greatest mischief that has been done : it excited the building as well as the burning of the temple of Diana. Mistake me not, reader : I do not mean to compare the former with the building of better temples, much less of temples “not made with hands.”



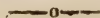
CCCCLXXXVI

WHAT must be the feeling of him who exclaims “O Death, where is thy sting? — O Grave, where is thy victory?” And he who exclaimed it “witnessed” and sealed it with his martyrdom.



CCCCLXXXVII.

WHAT a narrow sphere would the mercies of God have to move in, if they were confined to this life alone !



CCCCLXXXVIII.

THERE are two great dangers to society, when through the dissoluteness of its manners it is less disposed to restrain or to punish vice, and when through the weakness of its government it is less able to do it. The more vice

is tolerated, the more will Government be insulted. But to preserve it from this, manners as well as laws are necessary. When the latter are multiplied, it must be to supply the defect of the former; and what else will supply this defect? Nothing but the interposition of Providence, through its agents on earth.* While manners remain uncorrupted, Government may safely trust to public opinion for its support.



CCCCLXXXIX.

WHEN the senses are awake, the mind must be in action. Different kinds of action suit different characters and dispositions. A quiet and gentle continuance of action, both in itself and all around it, is best suited to a calm and well-regulated mind, especially after the “hey-day” of youth is passed. Perfect repose is only made for the hour of sleep. All states however are most agreeable when they succeed each other, and the true enjoyment of them all must be in the mind itself.



CCCCXC.

It is something for a man to know what he likes, and in some cases it is better that he should have a bad taste than an undecided one. If he is obstinate in it, he will at least give you something to animadvert upon, and to dispute with him, which the undecided man will hardly do, having little or nothing to say for himself: with the obstinate man you may whet your appetite for criticism, taking care however that he does not give you a rough edge.

* Encouragements however may be given to virtue, as well as punishments to vice.

There may also be more hope of curing obstinacy than of fixing indecision : though Solomon says, "There is more hope of a fool than of one who is wise in his own conceit." But this hope must depend upon the degree of obstinacy, the causes which produce it, and the disposition that accompanies it. In the north of England it is not ill denominated *stupidity*.



CCCCXCI.

THE great object of human life is acquirement, even of the dissipated man, though his is limited to the enjoyment of the moment : the ambitious or vain man will aim at glory, or honours,—the thoughtful man at knowledge, with the desire of which, as Cicero observes, our life begins ; and the extension and elevation of it here lead finally to the religious hope of its consummation in another world.



CCCCXCII.

THE uncertainty that we feel respecting all the events of this life, is a tacit acknowledgment of that Power, in whose hands all things are certain.



CCCCXCIII.

EVERY man must depend chiefly on himself : if he gave all the attention to his friend's wants that his own require, he would stand in equal need of a friend's assistance himself : and the acceptance of this on the other's part would

suppose a helpless abandonment that would scarce deserve the assistance of a friend. It must therefore be only in great and particular occasions that Cicero's "*vera et perfecta amicitia*" can be shewn: and the "*vulgaris et mediocris*" (which he says "*spia et delectat, et prodest*") must be all that is wanted or in common life can be shewn. And this, to make it lasting (*ut delectet et prosit*) must be mutual. Friendship that is shewn only on one side must probably be a burden on both: and the wish for an occasion to shew it will be more the suggestion of vanity than of any other feeling.

Horace's question, "*Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumve trahat nos?*" seems to be the result of that partial reasoning, and inability to combine, that so commonly shews itself: though he would probably be sensible that both the *usus* and the *rectum* must have their share.

CCCCXCIV.

THERE are moments, and those not a few, in human life, when all is harmony within, and all indicative of the happiness which the mind is capable of, when the jarring passions shall be at peace: this is most felt in the autumn of the year, and perhaps in that of our lives.

CCCCXCV.

IF maxims are too unfavourable to human nature, they will give us that opinion of it which can only tend to make cynics of us, and unfit us for the feelings and demonstrations of Christian charity, and may disincline us from

those endeavours which will render us more worthy both of the praise of our fellow-creatures, and that of our Maker, who certainly does not desire us to nourish a discontent with what belongs to the state we are in, or any sentiment that is at variance with our peace, and good will towards man. All that is desirable is, that we should be impressed with that humble opinion of ourselves and our nature (which should neither be over nor under-rated) that will keep us sensible how much all of us stand in need of the mercies of our Maker, and the merits and mediation of our Redeemer.



CCCCXCVI.

CONGENIALITY of disposition, and a certain instinct, a "sensus amandi," seem to be the moving principles of friendship; but there must also be a sense of want, to put those in action. Virtue (qua "nihil amabilius") is the best foundation for it, as that alone "entenders us for life," and we may hope "for ever:" for what but the prospect of that futurity could make us cherish, as we do, the memory of the past? In that, as in all our views of happiness, we look to what is to come; and the present indeed is too fleeting to fix our attention, and too uncertain in its duration to satisfy our desires.



CCCCXCVII.

THERE is as much pride and vanity in an excess of humility, as in any degree of self conceit; the tendency of both is to exalt ourselves at the expence of our reason, which is our best guide in the estimation and management

of ourselves ; the best, as 'it is referred to for the highest duties that we have to perform.



CCCCXCVIII.

CICERO's ideas of friendship, which he puts into the mouth of Loelius, seem calculated to make us independent of each other, without lessening the sense of our dependence on a higher power : however, he may a little over-rate the motives that incline us to friendship : for if we are not "*spe mercedis adducti*," I think we may be said to be *spe voluptatis* ; and great part of that pleasure must consist in the return we meet with to the friendship we feel. If we trace our instincts to their source, I think we shall find it to be in the desire of that happiness which is our "*being's end and aim*."



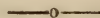
CCCCXCIX.

THE opinions of all the Philosophical sects are I believe founded in reason, though with too partial views, and carried to excess ; in this, and the consequences that have been drawn from them, the error consists. If Calvinism and Arminianism may, with certain restrictions, be made consistent with sound religion, so may Stoicism, Epicurism, and Pyrrhonism, with sound philosophy. When man errs, it is generally by overshooting his mark. His reason and his feelings have not each their due share of action and direction. The errors of their philosophy seem to have shewn themselves in the inconsistency of their conduct, according to Cicero.



D.

CICERO's reasoning seems to aim at an intelligence of our nature which only He can have who gave it to us. If he meant to adapt it to the feelings and capacity of his fellow creatures, he should not have carried it farther than that capacity warranted: he should not have given them a lesson that they would not understand, or that they might misunderstand.



DI.

IT may be said of every passion, as well as that of anger, that "nisi paret, imperat." A more extended sense must then be given to "animum rege;" the sense that Horace probably meant in his

"æquum mi animum ipse parabo."

But what will enable us "animum regere"? Religion.



DII.

MY reader knows the story of the boy who told Pope that he had "seven sides."* If the latter had had a little more philanthropy, or even curiosity, he might have asked the boy a few more questions; they would perhaps have furnished him with additions to his "Essay on Man:" the "nihil humani alienum" too might have incited him to do it.

* The seventh being his blind one.



DIII.

WHAT do men seek for in pride? Elevation. How much better might they find it in religion!



DIV.

MISERABLE indeed is the state, when sensuality outweighs sentiment. (See page 135.) What remains to distinguish the man from the beast?



DV.

CICERO says, "*utilitates ex amicitia maximæ capientur.*" Is not this acknowledging that utility is at least one incentive to friendship? Much of his reasoning, as well as that which he makes Lælius quote from the Grecian philosophers, &c. tends to shew how liable men are to err, when they reason partially and exclusively. But indeed if we did not do that, what should we have to dispute about?

The desire of expressing ourselves strongly is one great source of error. Truth lies in moderation.

Scipio says, "*si minus felices in diligendo fuisset, ferendum id potius, quam in inimicitiarum tempus cogitandum:*" that is, we should love our friend for his sake; if he prove unworthy of it, we should not hate him, for our own. "*Præcurrit amicitia judicium,*" &c. Yes, so much there is of risque in human life.* But, says Juvenal, "*Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia.*" Will not this hold good in friendship too?

* And of imprudence in human conduct.

DVI.

OUR attachment to our own opinions is something like that which accompanies our religious notions. "Orthodoxy is a man's own doxy, and Heterodoxy is every other man's doxy." Thus we make up for our want of knowledge by our obstinacy in opinion. Have I erred then, in saying that obstinacy is the strong hold of ignorance?

The opinions of one man afford room for the observations of another: we should be less able to assist each other, if we had not each other's errors to correct; an attendant the correction of our own, which we carry in "the wallet behind our backs."

Pope says, in that beautiful part of his *Essay on Man*,

—"Opinion gilds with varying rays
 "Those painted clouds that beautify our days;
 "Each want of happiness by hope supplied,
 "And each vacuity of sense by pride," &c.

And how many vacuities has pride to fill up! How many are the succedaneums for knowledge, that pride has to boast of, and perhaps to mistake for it; nay, we have outward supplies too for our inward wants; one man's pride is in his wig, another's in his hat, another's in his coat, &c.

DVII.

HABIT and sympathy are the two great solaces of human life. The first ensures a continuance of the enjoyments we have been used to; the second, a participation in those enjoyments, or a compensation for the

privation of them, whether temporary or lasting, in sharing that privation with another, and in the interchange of reflexions which it, and what accompanies it, give rise to. The change, the novelty, the comparisons that occur, all add to this, in the great drama of human life.

Redcar, Sept. 8, 1824.



DVIII.

WHAT compensation may we not find for the troubles or the *ennuis* of life, in the exercise of our own thoughts! and still more in the communication of them; and to what heights may they not raise us! What prospects may they not open to us! prospects, of which the wide expanse of ocean before me gives but a faint image. What sources of pleasure may not our thoughts open to us! The best and only real resources against ennui (that momentary *tædium vitæ*) are in our own minds, and we have but to think twice before we find them. Is it not for this purpose that an activity is given to the mind, far superior to that of the body?

Lavater says “*epargnez vos minutes.*” Husband your minutes. And he is right, for life itself is but one.



DIX.

“*NULLUM dicere maximarum rerum artem esse, cum minimarum sine arte nulla sit, hominum est parum considerate loquentium, atque in maximis rebus errantium.*”

Cicero's simplicity has all the weight and dignity of truth; will the sceptic say that analogy does not reach

so high? It reaches as high at least as we have the right or the power to reach ourselves. But what are the aspirations of the human mind?

—o—

DX.

THE fool says in his heart, "there is no God." The presumptuous or unreasonable philosopher says, give me stronger proofs: if we had these, might we not realize the fable of Semele, in being unable to bear the communication of them? Or might not our hearts still be obdurate, from the absence of feeling?

—o—

DXI.

THE value we set upon words, and what is attached to them, I think is pretty strongly shewn in our Botanical and Mineralogical Nomenclatures: it certainly makes a part (though it as certainly ought not to make a principal one) of the recommendation of those sciences. But the "*os magna sonans*" of a Lecturer — or even a novice — Ah surely —

"Not a vanity is given in vain."
and these have a fair place in Pope's list.

Reader, will you take as much of this to yourself as I do, humble as I am among the votaries of the goddess?

—o—

DXII.

Is it not an advantage of self-love that it affords so

much amusement, in others and in ourselves? Aye, and it affords food for it too.

“Crescit indulgens sibi.”

But let us not rub this irritation till we make a sore of it. Why should we not be followers of Democritus rather than of Heraclitus? Are our follies worth weeping at? No, that is not philosophy.



DXIII.

WE cannot be qualified to judge others, till we know what power men have over themselves. The want of this knowledge, with the substitution of false reasoning, is perhaps the source of Calvinism. If the Calvinists admit a future judgment, they must make it consist in God's rejudging his own justice;* for what he has pre-determined must come from himself.



DXIV.

ONE thing that distinguishes the higher from the lower classes of society, is a greater degree of artificiality; good sense must determine whether they gain or lose by this. The possession of that indeed may make every other acquisition unnecessary; or rather it is a foundation for them all: without it they can have no substance or value; instead of benefitting, they will injure and perhaps ruin us.

How many must there be in higher life who regret their being obliged to act an artificial part! Those only can

* That is, to make it accord with their own opinions.

be satisfied with doing it, who have no real character of their own (none at least left to them) or none that they dare venture to shew.



DXV.

THERE is a true and a false liberality : one is indulgence of vice, the other compassion for weakness : one is indifference to what is of importance ; the other diffidence of our power of judging it : one in short is the possession, the other the want (or at least the perversion) of reason and feeling. Want of liberality is a selfish want of charity : the excess of it, is as selfish a profession ;* for both must begin or end in *self*.



DXVI.

THERE is only one case in which self, (not selfishness), is entitled to be the ruling principle ; that is, in that Being, in whose self all things are centered. What contains all things, can exclude nothing.



DXVII.

IT is of less consequence out of what class of society we chuse our companions, than what are the qualities of the companions we chuse ; for there are good and

* Selfish, as being an interested pretence to what we do not possess.

bad in all classes. Some regard however is to be paid to the opinion of the world, and still more to the prospects of another, where all the associations of this shall cease excepting those which religion and virtue render immortal. If here, *noscimur*—there, probably *judicabimur* “a sociis.”



DXVIII.

CICERO says, that a man may attend to the welfare of his country, and his posterity, as well as to things of eternal consequence, even if he should consider himself as altogether mortal, and consequently without any prospect of a future enjoyment of the glory of what he had done. In this, Cicero argues as a heathen, who had received no assurances of a future life, and was therefore obliged at least to suppose it imaginary. But the Christian will believe otherwise, and will say, that if God has given to man an instinctive desire of providing for the benefit of those who live after him (which Cicero supposes he may do merely from a virtuous motive), he has also given him an instinctive desire of immortality, which must necessarily be concluded to be meant to answer some purpose—(and what purpose can it answer but its own verification?) as well as the other. That it is meant to answer the purpose of its verification, we are fully assured by the Gospel.

We fear Death, because it is meant that we should enjoy life, which is best done by doing all the good we can in it.

Cicero further supposes that the soul, being a simple substance, cannot be capable of dissolution, as com-

pound ones are. This surely is fair reasoning from analogy: but the materialists seem to aim at a supposition that the soul is capable of dissolution, by their uniting it essentially with the substance of the body, which they are at liberty to do, not having any proof from analogy that it is of a different nature, and independent of the body. Negative proofs (as the incapacity of matter to think, &c.) they will probably answer by denying our power of judging of that as well as other possibilities. The decision therefore must be left to opinion; opinion directed by reason and feeling; both which are appealed to by the Gospel.

Socrates' reasoning, as quoted by Cicero, on the two opposite courses taken by souls on their departure from the body, is a fair deduction from the opposite natures of virtue and vice, and their consequently opposite destinations.

—o—

DXIX.

CICERO says, in his treatise "*de senectute*," "*Temerritas est florentis ætatis; prudentia senescentis.*" To be convinced of the truth of this, we have only to remember what we were ourselves in our youth. Happy for us if old age has made us wiser.

—o—

DXX.

THAT there may be trials almost too great for human endurance, (and surely too great without a higher support) I think is evinced by the effect which the alternate

repetition of hope and fear produces on our minds, even in a matter so much in the natural course of things, and so subject to our past experience, and consequently to our future calculation, as the state of the weather, at a time when it is connected with what is so highly important to the interests of man,* and when it operates on our minds as well through the medium of that connexion as by the immediate influence which it has on them (Machines as we are) in the changes which it exhibits. We begin to tremble under our incapacity to calculate upon the justice and mercy of God, ignorant as we are what calls there may be upon the one, and whether the other may not be withheld from all our hopes on earth, to be reserved for a land which is to us a perfect terra incognita. But sunshine returns, and all our fears vanish.



DXXI.

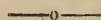
THERE are feelings which are so sanctioned by the best dictates of our reason, that we cannot help relying upon the hope that they will be perpetuated to us in another world, where only they can be perfectly displayed and enjoyed.



DXXII.

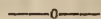
THOSE who have many things to thank God for ought to be most inclined to thank him for all.

* In the Harvest Season.



DXXIII.

How often have we feelings excited in us, which we may reasonably hope will be those of our last moments.*



DXXIV.

How copious, and at the same time how imperfect is language, when it can express, and only express in one word, what it is impossible for the utmost stretch of imagination to conceive—Infinity—Eternity—Ubiquity! one word can express them—a thousand cannot describe them.



DXXV.

THERE are moments in which we are inclined to distrust even our own feelings, sensible how transient they are, how much the sport of accident and how instrumental we may make them ourselves in artificial representation, which, unless they were really moved, could not be perfect. It was probably the sense of this, that induced Bradford, at the eve of his martyrdom, to call the prayers he uttered hypocritical, and to implore pardon for them as such. But this arises from the condition of our nature, imperfect as it is made, to suit the purposes of an imperfect

* I mean, that we shall *then* have the same.

state of existence. To blame ourselves therefore for that would be to blame the Author of our being.



DXXVI.

NOTHING in the writings of the heathens can be more sublime than the "*Somnium Scipionis*;" nothing can display a more astonishing anticipation of much of the knowledge that has been since acquired, or a stronger impulse to carry our ideas beyond it. The comparisons made in it, of this earth and of all that it contains, with the great assemblage of bodies that compose the universe, are admirable, and shew conceptions which are above all that the mere observation of this earth can bestow. The elevation of sentiment and the depth of reasoning are equally wonderful. A finer composition, or one that comprehends more in fewer words, cannot I think have been written. All that unassisted (if it may be called unassisted) reason can produce, is displayed in it. It seems extraordinary, however, that with all this perspicuity, and strength of reasoning, the improbability should not have occurred to Cicero of the sun and all the fixed stars moving round our globe, instead of that moving round the central sun along with the planets, which must have been observed to have motions different from the other celestial bodies. But in the first place, the *deceptio visus* probably precluded any better reasoning: and the more, as it did not interfere with the knowledge of other truths gathered from astronomical observations: the theory of different systems in the universe also had not occurred, though that was probably the consequence of the discovery of our own. The notions too which the Ancients had of Astronomy, were probably

derived from those of the prior times, confirmed perhaps by the information delivered to the Jews; an information that we cannot wonder was adapted to the intelligence and capacity of men whose minds were not yet prepared to receive better and truer. It was not philosophy that was meant to be taught to them, but morality and religion; and the information given them on both these points has stood the test of ages, and of all the objections that have been made to it, from its connexion with the other information they received; and the former was in fact as little obstructed by their astronomical errors, as the obscuration of eclipses, &c. was by those of the Chaldeans and other primitive nations. And after all, what has our boasted knowledge done towards our acknowledgment of still higher truths, which yet remain, as much, and perhaps are more, disputed by sceptics, who prefer, (and probably also pervert) discoveries, however imperfect, made by their reasoning faculties, to the communications which both their reason and their feelings are indispensably bound to acquiesce in.



DXXVII.

One observation, especially when productive of knowledge, suggests another; as one thought does. In the progress of both we have probably yet much to learn.



DXXVIII.

“UTRUM sit melius, vivere, an mori, dii immortales sciunt hominum quidem scire arbitror neminem.” (*Cicero Tuscul.*)

So far had the Ancients got in their estimation of the two states of life and death. Christianity would have informed them that the latter was the best, as being the real life, for which the first was only a preparation: and indeed Cicero might have gathered as much from his “*dii immortales*,” and from the similar state (of immortality) which his reasoning in other places argues so strongly to be the destiny of man. But the assurance of this was reserved for the gospel.



DXXIX.

THE desire of what is called a Radical Reform, I think argues very little knowledge of mankind, or attention to the changes produced in society by the different states of simplicity, knowledge, poverty, riches, &c. which it is in. Each has its virtues and its vices, its advantages and disadvantages; and to prevent these from counteracting each other, in some degree, would be to destroy that balance which Providence has meant to exist between good and evil; and it would certainly make the evil predominate for a while, (by the disorder it would produce) without any prospect of that final result of good (at least in effecting the end proposed) which Providence alone knows, and has reserved to itself, to bring out of evil. If things are *well* then, “let that well alone;” and if any thing interferes with that, let a remedy be found that will lessen the evil, without the vain hope of totally destroying it. Those who indulge, or appear to indulge this hope, act either from mistaken or from selfish motives, in following their own or others’ errors, or the impulses of their ambition, discontent, or some other passion.

 DXXX.

It is seldom that the spirit of opposition springs from any other motive than what originates in *self*; especially when considered as what its name implies and expresses; this I think will enable us to judge of its *purity*.

DXXXI.

THERE could not well be a more frank, and at the same time a more shameless, and let me add, a more arrogant avowal, than what Mr. Fox, I think, makes in his history of James the Second's reign, viz. that Parliamentary opposition ought not to be directed so much against measures as against men (and of course the measures they propose): frank, as being an avowal of the principles on which he himself acted; shameless, as braving all the censure that such a principle is liable to; and arrogant, as assuming to himself a right to judge independently of a man's immediate actions, to which alone (comprising the motives) regard ought to be had. Indeed in so judging and acting, a man may make a sacrifice of what would more or less benefit his country, and how will he justify himself? By the assertion, that the man he opposes could not do a good action from any but an evil motive. Thus he passes a sentence which we may venture to say, God himself would not pass, and he leaves not the opportunity which God has declared he will leave, for men to avoid doing ill, and to persevere in any course they may have begun, of doing well. What then are the human motives that thus make a man act, not in imitation of, but in opposition to, his Creator? What, but ambition?



DXXXII.

IF a man will not preserve his own independence (and this is a comprehensive, as well as a limited word) he will run the risk of violating the best principles he may have imbibed, and the best resolutions he may have previously formed.



DXXXIII.

“LICET videre, qualescunque summi civitatis viri fuerint, talem civitatem fuisse,” &c.—(*Cicero de Legibus*.)

Riches, luxury, and taste refine the manners of a State, and at the same time lay the foundation of its ruin, by the food they give to all the passions. This age has perhaps to see how far this will be counteracted by Christianity, how far its influence will supersede those laws of mutability to which every nation has been subject, and whether the permanency of a “rock” will be confined to itself alone. All other improvements contain within themselves the seeds of their dissolution. From these, Christianity must surely be free, as having Truth alone for its basis.



DXXXIV.

PLATO’S “conjunctio potestatis ac sapientiæ” may do much for a State, if his “docti et sapientes homines” are not subject, like other “doctors,” to “differ.”



DXXXV.

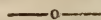
WHAT an imperfect idea of happiness must the Ancients have had, when they fancied it seated otherwise than in the mind! But does not the same mistake prevail now? We think all others happier than ourselves. Happiness then is placed in what we want—Contentment.

Pope's description of happiness perhaps only proves its non-existence. If it really existed, should we not know better how to describe it than by saying, "Happiness is happiness?" Call it Contentment, still something may be wanting, to afford a model to draw after, for who is perfectly content?

Pope hit his mark better when he says,

—"Man never *is* but always *to be* blest."

If happiness consists in the mind's being agreeably occupied, will not hope serve that purpose?



DXXXVI.

WANT of punctuality generally arises from the difficulty of finding employment for our time: if we could do that, it would give method* to every part of it. We should begin with early rising ("vegeti præscripta ad munia",) to have more time to do what we have accustomed ourselves to do: we should not be dependent on the men and things around us, for the accidental amusement or occupation of the moment, and every hour we

* The excess of method, however, like other excesses, has its evils; it narrows us into slaves.

gave to that would be stolen (stolen with intention to repay) from some more important business (and the importance of business depends greatly on the general effect that it has on our habits and minds:) in being masters of our habits we should be masters of ourselves.

He only employs his time well, who employs it to his own improvement, and a good habit will itself supply the place of any previous intention to profit by it. It is perhaps impossible to live without an object, if it is only the enjoyment of our ease; but it is the choice of an object that is important and difficult, for many will present themselves to an active mind. We should then perhaps hold ourselves in readiness for any that may occur. Our dependence on ourselves will make us masters of ourselves, for we shall take care to make that dependence a sure one. We cannot know how to value our time, till we know how to value ourselves; but both must have their limits; and both will chiefly depend on the "vitium fugere," which is itself an occupation, and will direct all the others.



DXXXVII.

THE assumption of importance generally arises from a consciousness of the want of it. What great value can we affix to the employment of time, when the chief object of it is, to "wash our hands in innocence?" This however is sufficient to give it value.



DXXXVIII.

THE possession of "talents for mankind," various as are the talents with which we are endowed, will naturally

impel us to the exercise and display of them, though we may sometimes have in view that "praise of men" which would be better and more universally obtained, if we directed our attention to the pursuit of higher as well as more reasonable objects. The sphere of utility which lies within the compass of each individual, is not, generally speaking, very extended; and we shall fill up a greater portion of it, if we do not attempt to carry it beyond its due bounds; if we do that, we shall be liable to the imputation of selfish vanity, which we should escape by paying a more real respect to ourselves, and shewing our judgment in making a better discrimination of the objects of our attention than in directing it to those whose title to it chiefly consists in the rank they hold in society. We should rather look below (but not so as to demean ourselves) than above us, and should rather wait for due occasions to bestir ourselves, than solicit them; for "this also is vanity." Men indeed are soon found out whose chief motive to action is the gratification of that passion; they cannot raise their heads higher than the fair observation of those who are capable of making it without being either blinded or dazzled, will reach to.



DXXXIX.

IT is not envy that censures a man for aiming at distinctions (however successful he may be in gaining them) that do him no real credit. The sense of what is due to ourselves, and to those who are on a par with us, or even below us, will generally be our rule in estimating the conduct of others in their intercourse with their fellow-creatures; and it is the best rule we can follow in this estimation, for it radiates from the centre of self-love.



DXL.

PRIDE and vanity may be equally shewn in demanding respect, and paying it; for ourselves or to others. The higher a man is raised, the more he ought to cast all selfishness beneath his feet, as being incompatible with the duties he has to perform.



DXLI.

SEEKING the praise of God is seeking that of our own conscience, the God within us; we cannot raise our views higher than that; the rest will follow of course, if we have been properly influenced by our reason.



DXLII.

PERHAPS we may presume, that the manifestation of qualities that really make us worthy of the esteem of our fellow-creatures, atones in some measure for the neglect of the duties of religion, and of those which ours imposes upon us. But this can be only when we act without the deliberate intention of "seeking the praise of men more than the praise of God." This can only be known to us by a thorough examination of ourselves, which it certainly is not our interest to defer till the latest period of life. We should remember, that whatever may be the merit of the impulses we act from, they certainly are not derived from ourselves; and therefore ought not to be placed to the credit of our account.



DXLIII.

THE despair, or at least the depression of all earthly hopes, may be the commencement and elevation of all heavenly ones. This appears to be the present state of Louis XVIII. (Sept. 1824).*



DXLIV.

To mix authority with accommodation, to ensure the respect of others, without assuming too much to ourselves—to conciliate and to command—is one of the most important and most difficult businesses in social life. A certain degree of reserve, tempered with frankness, is perhaps the easiest and most effectual means of doing it; for it implies a command over ourselves, that ensures the respect of others. But the conduct must be as uniform as the manner. Versatility is a bad resource; for if a man acts the part of a weather-cock, at what point can he fix himself? A due respect to ourselves is our best security.



DXLV.

WHEN men differ, it is generally when they get beyond the reach of common sense; if they keep within that, it will be a standard round which they cannot help rallying. The more they get beyond it, the more difficult is the retreat.

* He died soon after.



DXLVI.

COURAGE without feeling makes a man a tyrant, or a brute ; both united make him almost a God.



DXLVII.

THE maxim of “*de mortuis nil nisi verum*” is far preferable to “*nil nisi bonum*,” as it is more the example than the person which is to be followed or avoided, and the influence of that example subsists after Death, when those who have made themselves conspicuous in the world will be remembered, and it is but doing justice to the memory of the good, to distinguish them from the bad. If nothing but good was to be spoken of the dead, the living would want one inducement to deserve well of posterity. It is the example we leave behind us, that is of most importance to future generations ; for what is there else to record ?



DXLVIII.

SOMETIMES, the more a man has, the more he wants ; certainly, the more he wants the poorer he is. It is not therefore what we call riches that make a man rich, but his contentment with, and his power of enjoying what he has. Without that, riches are but a name.

DXLIX.

THOSE who make rank in life the great object of their attention, will be sure more or less to sacrifice their regard to real worth.

DL.

MEN (my respect for the Ladies forbids me to include their sex) are now so warm in the pursuit of pleasure in all its shapes, that the only chance there is of their acting like reasonable beings, is in the intervals of rest which the fatigue of the chace requires, unless indeed there is another in their wearing out the animals of whose service they avail themselves in following it, though the improvement of pedestrianism may exclude even that.

Would not "the age of pleasure" be a proper title to a satirical poem? How many descriptions would it include? But we want a Young to make them. Who will take up his pen?

DLI.

THERE is a plainness in the character of our countrymen that exposes them to the impulse of their passions (for Nature is too apt to be at variance with reason) and must serve as an excuse even for that want of urbanity which makes them so offensive to the other nations of Europe. You must gain the heart of an Englishman before he will be thoroughly civil to you, and even then there is a plainness, if not a roughness in his manner, that prevents his

civility from being perfectly acceptable. You must let him have his own way, at least to a certain point, to make him completely your friend, for he will be independent of you, and even of himself, as he fancies, though while he imagines he is master of himself, he is in fact only his own slave, the slave of his humours. All these propensities require higher aims and more rational acquirements to subdue them, and to give the proper tone and direction to our feelings; for it is only the right use of our reason, that will make the finished gentleman, as that will give us the knowledge of all our duties, under the guidance of the authority which has prescribed them.



DLII.

WE must have our frailties (and who has not?) to know them, and we must know them, to be on our guard against them. In this chiefly consists the knowledge of ourselves.



DLIII.

IF a man is gruff in his youth, he will be still gruffer (unless he is softened down by the changes and chances of life) in his old age. His gruffness *then* is not so noisy and violent; he does not bark like a cur, but he growls like a mastiff, and you must give him a sop, well seasoned to his palate, to keep him in good humour; perhaps he may then let you stroke and pat him.*

* This representation is true only when those propensities are not corrected by the judgment; when they are, the character improves as age advances, even in spite of bodily infirmities.

DLIV.

THERE can be no freedom, and consequently no real enjoyment of conversation, where there is not liberty of opinion ; and the only restraint a man should be under is what his conscience dictates to him. If that errs, it will be sufficient that others express their dissent from him, whether it makes him sensible of his error or not ; for the same liberty of holding and expressing an opinion is due to them as to him, and they will probably have the advantage of number over him. But a man should take care that the opinion he expresses is his real one, and such as his conscience and his reason approve of, for which some consideration is required. Without this, he cannot expect to have the credit either of sincerity, or consistency ; for his opinions, as Cicero says, cannot take root, but are as fading as flowers, which they must be, if they are not founded in reason. Obstinacy may make them durable, in the individual himself, but it will give them no real vigour, nor will they suit the soil they are planted in, at least not till they have changed its nature.

DLV.

CICERO commends the law of the twelve tables, which made it death for any one to sing or to compose a poem tending to defame the character of another : placing the right to pronounce upon that solely in the Courts of Justice, where the person accused could defend himself. But if that is so, what shall we say to Pope's lines,

“ Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,

“ But touch'd and sham'd by ridicule alone ?”

Cicero, perhaps, forgot that there is another court—public opinion—whose judgments can be only misled for a while.

Perhaps the vice or the folly only should be satirized, and the application left to the public; which indeed poets pretend to do, under a borrowed name, as Pope has done in his "Timon." But this is only an evasion. After all it may be said, that as it is the follies or the vices of men that we censure, the occasion for it must be taken from the most striking examples of them. If we err in the choice, or carry it too far, it is at our own peril. It is to public opinion that we address ourselves.

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DLVI.

If a man really aims at the glory or good of his country, he deserves to be applauded for it, whatever that country is; for at any rate it must be peopled by his fellow-creatures, with whom, as their countryman, he ought to identify himself. Both Themistocles and the Seriphian then were wrong, in undervaluing the respective countries. Themistocles perhaps was more right in undervaluing *his man*.—(See Cicero de Senectute, cap. 3.)

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DLVII.

THE Stoic who will not allow pain to be an evil, appears to me to have only the merit of the malefactor who "dies hard;" that is, if the acknowledgment of pain is to be compared with that of guilt.

—o—

DLVIII.

THE great charm, the true enjoyment of polished society, is, in the right use of our reason and our feelings:

this is the only source of, and security for, pleasure and confidence, in the intercourse between individuals, be they of which sex they may: this gives a value to the most trifling things we do, to the embellishment of our houses, our tables, persons, &c. for the same judicious taste (and the more refined the more judicious, and vice versa) will shew itself in all our pursuits, nor will it be less evinced in the extent to which we carry them, in which our moderation will be "known," as it ought to be, "to all men." This will influence the conduct and conversation of those who, if they are not induced to it by their own feelings, will be by their desire to recommend themselves to others, in imitating whom, they may perhaps "assume a virtue" which they "have not." All publications, however light they may be, and all the exertions of humour or pleasantry, should have the improvement of society for their object, or at least they should not counteract it in the amusement they give. Let me conclude this perhaps too long detail with giving our Sovereign the credit due to him for the degree of attention which he pays to these objects; and more for the real and liberal munificence which in part at least atones for, at the same time that it makes us regret, the retired life that he leads, and in which the society of a few persons, however chosen, is a bad substitute for that more general communication, which his people wish for, and have a right to expect. It would be well if he considered how much he deviates in some respects from the example of his excellent Father.

The above praises will be given him by those who content themselves with the indulgence of the feelings which excite it, at a distance, which no selfish vanity or ambition will make them wish to lessen; for why should they desire to change a situation in which they are equally capable with all others, of doing their duty to the Sovereign of

Sovereigns, and to his creatures, in the limited sphere to which their means, or their capacities, and still more their wishes, confine them.



DLIX.

THOSE who respect themselves, will pay the respect due to others, and particularly to those who hold the highest place in society. Let not therefore those to whom that respect is due, shun any occasion of receiving it, from apprehension of its being withheld, or of any contrary demonstrations being shown, or from their having experienced or even provoked the latter: let them rather be assured that all such dispositions are done away, or would be reprobated by the better part of society, and that they are amply compensated by the general opinion of the country: let them afford opportunities for the well disposed to distinguish themselves from the few who perhaps might act a more unworthy part: if they do this, they will return from their rides, or whatever may have called them forth, with satisfaction to themselves, and to all who are near them, or are within reach of that information which is spread through all ranks of society by the public papers or other channels. As they deserve popularity by their conduct, through their Ministers, let them also acquire it by their personal conduct, and let them set the example which they surely would wish to see in others, and must consequently feel a satisfaction in having afforded themselves.



DLX.

THE formality of former times is certainly not ill exchanged for the ease of the present, but in avoiding formality, we should not lose sight of all form and order. The

master or mistress of a house, for instance, should not be confounded with their guests (or company, if an old word is objected to) at the dinner table, nor even in the drawing room, where mutual attentions are equally required. The honours of a house must be done and received ; and we are not aware how much the neglect of appearances may injure realities.



DLXI.

“ NULLUM numen abest, si sit prudentia.”

How often does this maxim occur to our thoughts ! and how sensible we must be of our liability to violate it, both from the impulse of our passions, and of our best feelings ! Perhaps it is impossible to secure ourselves completely from that liability, and we must be content with erring on the right side, if error can have that.



DLXII.

NOTHING can more strongly prove the varying states of the human mind, than the alternate exhilaration and depression, agitation and calm, which it is subject to. They shew the mutability of every thing in this world, and they prepare us (for all motion must end in rest) for the immutability that will take place in another.



DLXIII.

KEEPING an account of the money we receive and expend is rendering to ourselves at present what we all must

render at the last, to him who gave us both the means and the obligation to do it.—It is not only the spending of our money that we keep an account of, but of our time also, for it is a sort of journal that we keep; those therefore who dislike doing it (perhaps from fear) must equally dislike both; and they must give a latitude to our Saviour's precepts of "letting the morrow take care of itself," that he most certainly never intended it should have; they neglect the care of "the day," which is a preparation for the morrow; they leave every thing to the impulse of the present moment, or to mere habit, forgetting that a hope of the future must be grounded, even in this life, upon a retrospect of the past, for our past habits must influence our future conduct and all its consequences: all those then they give up, and for what? To avoid doing that *now* which they must do hereafter; to put themselves on a level with "the beasts that perish," which they cannot do entirely, for *they* will have no account to render, as they have no responsibility to fulfil.



DLXIV.

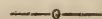
THOSE who are really good, and those alone, can have no evil day to put off; they have only to leave all to the great Disposer of events. He however will supply the want of goodness in the humble penitent, by granting a share of his own.



DLXV.

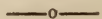
WHAT excuses a wife's participation in her husband's

offences in the eye of the law, viz. her being under his influence, often condemns her in that of the public ; but this judgment, founded as it probably is on a previous conclusion, will not be passed, unless she shows her participation to be voluntary ; she may avoid this by showing it not to be participation, but submission.



DLXVI.

WHO contemplates and admires the works of the great Creator ? who sees him in them, adores him for them, and “ gives him thanks for the glory ” which he has displayed ? Man, and, on earth, Man alone. For Man then, in part at least, all these were surely made.



DLXVII.

PROVIDENCE has justly ordained, that in multiplying the number of our enjoyments, we should multiply that of our cares. Our enjoyments attach us to this world, and at the same time make us feel how perishable is every thing in it ; all but the sense of having done well, and our reliance on the goodness and mercy of our Maker, in his acceptance of our imperfect endeavours to do it. This sense was the sole bequest of our Saviour to his disciples, whom he enjoined to “ take no thought for the morrow,” that nothing might interfere with the great work they were sent upon. In this, the means and the end vouch alike for its truth.



DLXVIII.

THE enjoyment of a place must be in the mind of him who occupies it, whether it is the "cottage" of a peasant or a king. If there is the capacity of enjoyment, it will probably encrease with the beauties of the place, and still more with the society that occasionally fills it, on which both the king and the peasant must be in some degree dependent. As the former has the greater liberty of choice, he is the more dependent upon it, and more responsible for his exercise of that liberty, responsible both to others and to himself.



DLXIX.

SOME philosophers hold, that the universe is a whole, to which nothing is added, and nothing taken from it—that each part contains its own supplies within itself: their idea is probably founded on the necessary perfection of that whole, as being the work of an all-perfect Being. But they forget, in what that whole consists, or rather perhaps what lies beyond it — Infinity. Of that, what can be conjectured?*

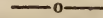


DLXX.

SETTING a value upon trifles, unless it is given them by other circumstances, may be considered as a mark of an

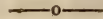
* Besides, to unfold the progress of material formation, we should be able to trace matter to its first principles. Where are they to be found but in the First Cause of all? His fiat is all that is required.

illiberal mind ; for it seems to flow from a desire that they should be accepted in lieu of things more worthy of it : they do not mark the good-will of the donor, so much as his selfishness : he endeavours to deceive you into a value of them, by what he appears to set upon them himself : if his pride leads him to this, it is still selfishness.



DLXXI.

ACCURACY in expression is not always accuracy in reasoning. If it were, the French would be the best reasoners upon earth. Perhaps the ease of expression which their language affords, may prevent the ideas from being better digested. They certainly do not attend to the proverb, “*Chi va piano, va sano.*”



DLXXII.

I DO not know whether I shall be thought whimsical in saying, that the two most beautiful animals in the creation are the horse and the butterfly : the former for its general form, action, &c. ; the latter for the beauty and majesty of its outline, and its colours, (to both which its action is correspondent.) The forked animal, man, must make the most of his “*human face divine,*” and the intelligence that animates it, to vie with these.



DLXXIII.

THERE are persons in the world who are good-natured and sensible, and at the same time easy and indulgent to

every one about them but themselves; thinking perhaps to atone for that indulgence and all its ill consequences (which however they may not foresee) by the labour they take upon themselves. One is inclined to regret that such characters should have any but themselves to manage.

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DLXXIV.

A TRUE patriot should have something more in view than the glory of his country; or rather, he should place that glory in what will really benefit it—in the justice it does to itself and other nations; not so much in the extent of its power and dominion as in promoting the good of mankind, which it is more able and more obliged to do by the power and dominion it possesses. Without this, its prosperity will only be the forerunner of its ruin.

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DLXXV.

WHEN a country has many objects of interest, an exclusive attention to any one of them can never promote its general interest; and its having many such objects proves their connection with, and their dependence upon each other.

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DLXXVI.

OUR resentments should have self-defence only in view, as their object and end; except indeed when we have the further view of reforming those against whom we feel them. Any thing vindictive will but retort upon ourselves.

DLXXVII.

IF you should happen to meet with people who are disposed to give themselves airs, the best way of treating them is, not with a return of contempt (unless you think it necessary to assume an attitude of defiance) or even of disapprobation, for 'tis at least an even chance that it will provoke and confirm them still more, but by adverting to some subject, or expressing some feeling, foreign it may be to their case, but which would do them more credit to join in, than the dispositions they indulge; if they have any reason or sympathetic feeling about them, this will awaken it; if not, they will go their own way, and you yours; and time will perhaps make them ashamed of themselves.

DLXXVIII.

WHEN we grow old, and draw near the end of life, we are sensible that we have a great deal yet to learn, and may complain with Theophrastus (Cic. Tuscul.) of the shortness of life, and of the time allowed us to acquire knowledge in: but we are not sufficiently sensible of the decay of our powers in their ability to add to the knowledge we have already acquired; we mistake our power of retaining that, and reasoning upon it, for the power of adding to it. Besides, if we have learnt enough to know how little our knowledge amounts to, what more have we to learn? We forget that we have to "wait the great teacher, Death." What indeed we might learn if life were further protracted, would add but little more to that

"remaining sum,

"That served the past, and must the times to come."

The rest would be but "learning's luxury or idleness!" Where then is the "*Ars longa, vita brevis*?" Do we make the best use of the time we have? or would we leave nothing to those who come after us?—So we reproach ourselves, with still greater reason, for having delayed the time of our devotional feelings till only the "dregs of life" remain, for us to pour them out in expression: but we do not consider that it is not so much the time as the sincerity of our expression of them (which indeed may be weakened by delay) that is regarded; that God will accept the one in lieu of the other, which however will not be the case, if we purposely delay them, for no compromise will be allowed. God's mercy may be that "of a moment;" but in that moment what is comprehended? We must not however wilfully defer it; if we do, it is at our peril.



DLXXIX.

THE characters we display in our advanced age do not always depend on the education we have received, at least not on the early part of it, for it is not always in the nursery that we are spoiled. There is sometimes a germ within us, that owes its developement to other causes. What proceeds from the parent stock (Nature the parent) or what may have been engrafted on it, is hard to say; we are as we are, and upon that, no doubt, more or less depends what we shall be. To determine that, it behoves us to know what is in our own power; the rest we must leave to Heaven.

Stiffness of manner generally proceeds from a desire to arrogate more to ourselves than we have a right to expect, or from a jealousy that others will not allow it to us. If this is accompanied with any affability, it must proceed

from better motives, or else from policy. Activity of mind, undirected by judgment, will make us run into various errors. We shall endeavour to court the good opinion of others, by attentions that we find we cannot persevere in, consistently with our other views; and by that means we shall incur the imputation of insincerity, by what was in fact indiscretion. All this may be very consistent with philanthropy and good feelings; and we may trust that it will meet with that pardon which may be expected to human frailty and errors.

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DLXXX.

IT is curious enough that the reason which Cicero gives, (Offic. ii. 18.) for our hating ingratitude is itself a selfish one. *

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DLXXXI.

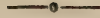
Is it not an objection (besides others) against Pythagoras's doctrine of the transmigration of souls, that we should pass into this life from another, only to gain a further knowledge of our ignorance? And what more should we gain in self-correction? How much less should we leave for the mercy of our Creator to make up? Do we doubt his power or his will to do it? The gospel teaches us another lesson. Why should we suppose the trial protracted? Does the justice or the knowledge of God want further information?

* See No. CCCXCVIII, page 201.

DLXXXII.

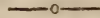
Is it a stronger proof of the weakness and selfishness of mankind, or of the vanity of riches, that we see so much partiality and injustice in the wills that are made, and so little reparation made for it by those who have been favored at the expence of others, who had a stronger, or at least an equal claim? Where this reparation has been made, the world has surely given the full portion of credit due to it, and the conscience of the individual has as surely joined in the applause. What then shall we say of the feelings that are not moved by these considerations?

If riches are so vain in the eye of our Almighty Judge, that he considers the disposal of them as of no consequence (which we cannot suppose, for why else the 8th and 10th commandments?) such disposals, unjust as they are, would not be worth notice: but if otherwise, what may be expected from him who “has the sceptre and the rod” in his hands, and will use them in that retribution which justice requires? As for ourselves, we may and must blame—the rest we must leave to him. “*Liberemus animas nostras;*” and let that content us. Human laws can only take cognizance of the rights of possession; those of expectation it cannot reach, for their fulfilment depends on the free will of the present possessor; but both are equally rights, and he who violates the one, and he who wilfully withholds the other, are perhaps equally culpable. But the punishment is reserved for him who gave the free-will, and who alone knows the hearts of those who exercise it.



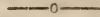
DLXXXIII.

THE knowledge of ourselves ought to be sufficient to give us a mean opinion of human nature, such as it generally exhibits itself in this world : if any examples in others make us more sensible of its unworthiness, it implies a defect in the previous knowledge of ourselves. We have, however, the power of self-correction : and the opinion of others, as well as the dictates of our reason, and our conscience, should regulate us in using it.



DLXXXIV.

THERE is a part of society, more fashionable perhaps than respectable, to which the best recommendation is the being able to laugh either with them (often at nothing) or to bear being laughed at by them. There is indeed a third resource—laughing at others who are absent. And is not that better than seriously abusing them ? Such laughing is the gratification of ill-humour under the appearance of good ; or, to speak more candidly, of thoughtless levity.



DLXXXV.

THE cultivation of reason is sometimes at the expence of feeling ; and this never shews itself more disgustingly than in the female sex, in which such characters avail themselves of the protection and respect generally due to it, without acknowledging or appearing to feel their want of them. They can hardly expect that respect which that acknowledgment would otherwise entitle them to.

DLXXXVI.

IDLENESS is said to be the root of evil. In low life it employs itself (for it does not stagnate) in stealing property; in high, in stealing reputations. It will not leave to others what it cannot gain itself.

DLXXXVII.

IT is a mixture of hope and fear—of awe and confidence—that gives the highest interest to our religious meditations; and all this is to be found in the Psalms.

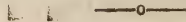
DLXXXVIII.

HE who is not contented with his own country can hardly be contented with himself. And how should he, when he has so little reason to be so? But it is so much trouble to change one's self,—that is, one's habits! "Coelum, non animum mutare," is much easier. Those who are not satisfied (and more than satisfied) with their mother country, are children whom she can very well afford to part with.

DLXXXIX.

MEN in society, as at a fancy ball, may assume what characters they please, provided they adhere to the rules of propriety, and we may add, of consistency. If these

are observed, every character will be well and properly performed, for the judges will be equally attentive to theirs. Society ought to be so regulated, that an interest, more or less, may be taken in every character that is assumed: where it cannot, neglect or avoidance can only follow. Society in short ought to be so regulated as to be a fit preparation for a still higher. For this, the laws have been given to us; we can only act, with any confidence, the parts which are suited to the company we are in. Thus Fingimur, ut “noscimur a sociis.”



DXC.

As vice and folly gain upon mankind, they awaken the observation of virtue and good sense, who are forced in their own defence to counteract them; and the sense of their own interest (enforced, we may hope, by better motives) will range the majority on their side.



DXCI.

How are we to measure time?—By what has elapsed? It appears but as a day. By what is to come?—It appears an age. What space of time are we to call long or short? The life of man?—we call it a little day. When we look back into history, we call the last two or three hundred years “modern times;” the ages of antiquity we call distant, and even out of the reach of our sight, merely because we cannot look into them for want of their events being authentically

recorded. We consider the age which is assigned to the earth (about 6000 years) as short, without knowing what duration could be called long, short of eternity, which our reason as well as religion forbids our allowing it; and both also seem alike to forbid our allowing it in future. How is time itself measured? By the revolutions of the earth round the sun and its own axis: this is merely a repetition, that leaves nothing but number to record, and what does it signify to what that number amounts? If we had nothing else to look back to, how should we distinguish one year from another, in any number that may have elapsed? Time then is to be measured only by what has been or may be done in it. It may indeed be measured comparatively, but where is the standard of comparison when we look backwards or forwards into a series of ages that have no end? A million of moments or a million of years are the same in this comparison, for they bear the same proportion to an eternity that cannot be measured, but of whose existence we cannot doubt; that of time depends on the very events by which it is measured. Time then in itself is nothing: A day an hour, a minute may be long or short, according to what is done in it. To our sensations, time appears long or short, according as it is disagreeably or agreeably passed, in pain or in pleasure; to our reflections, as it has been usefully or carelessly spent.

It may be said, that events require time for them to happen in. Shall we then say, that those on which the existence of time depends, also prove that existence?

Again: Time is a portion of eternity; as Young says,

“—— From old eternity’s mysterious round
Was Time cut off,” &c.

But how can eternity, which is itself boundless, be divided

into parts, or portions? How could Time be "cut off" from it, except by a poetical fiction? What we call time, we consider as such; but what is it to beings, who are not circumstanced as we are? What, to the world of spirits? What is meant by "old eternity?" &c.

How inadequate is language to such definitions!



DXCII.

WHAT are our Journals, Memorandums, Meteorological Diaries, &c. but a desire to fix the memory of the fleeting moment? Happy when we can turn it to a better account. But how much more are we in general inclined to lose it in the prospect of the next! Will that afford any thing more worthy to be recorded? Or will it all together be consigned to oblivion? No—each as it flies will be accounted for. Let us then,

"—— the fleeting hours secure,
"And note each down for wisdom."

And how is this to be done, but by habits of reflection? Let not the dissipated man think, that what he loses himself will not elsewhere be treasured up. The occurrence of the present moment is of the more value, as it is sure to have an influence on the next, and on all the succeeding.



DXCIII.

IF we do not admit the freewill of man in the choice of good or ill, we might suppose that his reason was given him, only that it might be disgraced, with some few examples of its being better used.



DCXIV.

IF we are able to speak a language without being acquainted with its grammar, we merely do it from memory, without any better knowledge: it is only the act of a parrot, except that the bird does not attach any meaning (at least that we know) to the words it utters. The mere habit of loquacity in the human species is little more than the same repetition; and how many such parrots are there among the "bipedes implumes?" "How are you, Jack?" said a passer-by to a jay in a cage. "Pretty well, pretty well," answered the bird. Do our answers often mean any more? except indeed as an acknowledgment.



DCXV.

How often is the want of thought supplied by habit! Is not man a self-moving automaton? His passions excepted, the extension or contraction of a single wire retards or quickens his motions.



DXCVI.

IF an Utopian system could be realised it would form a machine that would be subject to new diseases and would require new remedies. In the natural course of things both are provided. It may indeed be a question, whether any system that man can form, would suit a perfect state: for all he could do,

would only be leaving out the imperfections he sees here; but what will he provide in their stead? Will not his machine stand still, for want of springs to move it?



DCXVII.

Is it from our experience of the world or from our ill nature, that we are readier to give credit to the most exaggerated descriptions of human depravity, than to the most moderate ones of human goodness? The latter indeed shews itself rarely, from modesty and unobtrusiveness: the former is oftener seen, from its want of power to conceal itself. But the unclouded sight of both is reserved for the eye that is all-seeing.



DXCVIII.

THE pleasure of hearing others censured, is generally accompanied and heightened by a compliment paid to ourselves. Both the pleasure and its accompaniment, however, wear out by frequent repetition. We are indeed generally prepared for the compliments paid us by others, by those we pay to ourselves: the sincerity of the latter, (for self-flattery has its sincerity) often makes us blind to the irony of the former. It is only self-knowledge that can set all this right.

DXCIX.

How beautiful and how terrible by turns is that boundless waste of waters, the ocean ! awful at all times in its immensity, but most tremendously so in its storms, it presents an image of the smiles and frowns of its Creator, whether we consider it as an agent, an instrument, or an emblem. By frequent beholding, indeed, it may lose great part of its effect upon us : a proof that we receive all our impressions through the medium of our senses, which, when they become blunted by use, cease to communicate them to our minds.

Redcar, Sept. 23, 1824, mari tumescente.

DC.

A PROPENSITY to scandal may partly proceed from an inability to distinguish the proper objects of censure : the many occasions there are for this might very well save us the trouble of seeking for objects of scandal. Judicious censure is no more than just discrimination : scandal confounds all distinctions, in disabling us from making them : and it destroys all the value both of our praise and our blame.

DCI.

A FANCIFUL person ("malade imaginaire") shares the fate of an habitual liar, and deservedly : the latter loses all his credit by the frequency of his lies ; the former,

all his title to compassion by his continually fancying, or pretending to fancy himself ill. “*Mens sana*” is however wanting—the *corpus sanum* must probably be so too.

—o—

DCII.

THE extreme of self-indulgence is self-abandonment; perhaps self-brutification.

—o—

DCIII.

THERE is a mode of addressing a man, which requires either perfect power over him, or perfect confidence in him: both are maintained by a good opinion of him, and both sanctioned by a well-grounded confidence in ourselves.

—o—

DCIV.

THE reward of resignation is, the insurance of hope.

—o—

DCV.

THERE are no two qualities that are more necessary to accompany each other, and more difficult to be made to draw together than prudence and good nature: the extreme of one is centered in self—that of the other is a total abandonment of it.



DCVI.

WE should never entirely lose sight of those whose conduct we disapprove of, and whom we wish to reclaim (especially if they are any way connected with us) till all hope of their reformation ceases: that is, till they no longer exist: for in this case, as well as that of bodily illness, “while there is life there is hope.”

If a man shewed any sign of right feeling, we might give him our approbation, even if we doubted his sincerity: it might induce him to the continuance of it, which, in becoming a habit, would beget a second nature. Distrust may bring on desperation.



DCVII.

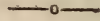
WHEN we have left the paths of rectitude, and are determined not to return to them, our only resource against the betrayal of conscious shame is in assuming an air of impudence, which gives the last finish to every kind of depravity. Those who are in this state need not fear their being put to this trial before others who have better sentiments, since the latter will avoid their society as much as possible.



DCVIII.

THE smallest trifle from one whom we love and esteem, is of more value to us than the most important communication from one who does not excite those feelings—and why? Because it comes from a person who deserves our

confidence, and who will return it? A well-grounded confidence in ourselves is the best title we can have to the confidence of others.



DCIX.

IN scholastic disputation, and even in studious meditation, we are apt to satisfy ourselves with being able to give an immediate answer to a question without considering the questions that still remain behind it. Thus we pay ourselves with words. When we consider the subject more deeply, we find how small is the amount of the knowledge we have displayed. But even learning has its vanities : these, however, are but a superficial consolation ; the goodness of Providence has given us a better, in making the sense of our ignorance an excitement to know more in this life, and to hope for the attainment of perfect knowledge in the life to come.

The power of expression, and that of conception, are so interwoven with each other, that we are unable to distinguish (if they can be distinguished) between them. Varied expression indeed may add to knowledge, by placing a subject in a new light. But, after all, what more do we gain than tropes and figures?—what more than the substitution of representation for reality?—what more than similitudes? Shall I be guilty of a pun, in saying that the word *reflection* implies it, by signifying the mirror in which the image is “ dimly seen?”



DCX.

How majestic is the sea, when it is agitated by storms !
How is that majesty lowered, when we consider it as

being merely acted upon by another element, the wind !
 And how do both sink in our estimation, when we look up
 to him, whom both the winds and the waves obey !



DCXI.

A MAN who knows what it is to be cheerful here, will,
 we may hope, know what it is to be happy hereafter.
 His state of mind will surely fit him for both. But how
 different is the state of him who laughs from the mere
 ebullition of his spirits, with nothing but their native
 warmth to excite it, from him who calmly examines his
 mind to know whether he is content or not : but which
 will be the most permanent, impulse or thought ? If the
 mind is fully occupied, is not that enough ? Better indeed
 if the occupation is an agreeable one : but from how many
 sources may exhilaration of mind proceed ?



DCXII.

How many objects that are well worthy of attention
 would be comparatively neglected, if they did not meet
 with an able describer to draw that attention to them !
 Among these I would rank the city of Iseur or Isurium,
 now the borough (no longer a city) of Aldborough, so in-
 teresting as a British and Roman antiquity, and so well
 described by the honest and able old antiquarian Hutton,
 in his trip to Coatham, in 1810.



DCXIII.

THE doctrine of Christianity was taught by our Saviour,

after the minds of men had been prepared for it by the miracles exhibited to the Jewish nation, and those performed by Christ himself; without which, in all probability, that doctrine would not have been received—"If ye believe not me, believe my works." That this would have been the case we may presume from the necessity the heathen priests were under, as is observed by Hutton, quoting from Hargrove's History of the British monuments at Aldborough, of "teaching what the most enlightened of them did not believe." The people's minds were not prepared for a spiritual doctrine: a grosser worship was therefore imposed upon them. Let this speak for the truth of Christianity.



DCXIV.

WHO that thinks seriously of himself does not find some matter for regret, humiliation, and apprehension? Happy if those feelings atone for the consciousness which excites them. But what would they do without another atonement? Will the answer be, they would do as Socrates, Plato, Cicero, did? They might, and we know that those heathens will be "judged by their own laws." But if that judgment is worthy of the goodness, and even of the justice of God, were the laws themselves worthy of a Being who is perfect himself, and who has given us a model of perfection to imitate? From whence, and on what errand, did that model and that Atoner come? Can we, ought we, to regard him with any other feelings than those of the adoration which he himself has claimed? If we follow other laws and other conditions, they must be of our own framing, and

made at our peril: the "blood" that the Jews called for, "on their own and their children's heads," may be upon ours.



DCXV.

IT may be said, and perhaps truly, that in this world vice is its own punishment, and virtue its own reward; but are we reformed by the one, or satisfied with the other? And what is the greatest reward that virtue can give, but the hope of a still greater? And the same may be said of the punishment of vice, in the fears it excites. If these are the retributions meant, they can hardly be final.



DCXVI.

ONE of the best disposals of the riches of this world is in the employment of industry; and the satisfaction it gives us (besides that of the fulfilment of duty) in gratifying our desires of improvement, embellishment, &c. through the agency of others, ought to dispose us to the discharge of a further debt to society, to God, and to our own consciences, in affording relief to those who are disabled by sickness, age, or other infirmities or misfortunes, from earning it by their labours, and protection and instruction to those whose advance in life has not yet enabled them to earn it at all.

One of the best employments a man can engage himself in, is in finding employment for others; and this there are various means of doing: the best is what improves the mind.

DCXVII.

IT must be acknowledged that our passions are powerful misleaders, and their power consists in the immediate gratifications they afford : it is experience only that makes us know the price that we must pay for them.

DCXVIII.

THE life of a man ought to be of as much consequence in the eyes of another, as it is little perhaps (except as far as relates to another life) in the eye of God. For what is the gift of that, in proportion to what he has to give?

DCXIX.

THERE is nothing new under the sun. The common observation, common experience, and common sense of mankind, would suggest the same ideas to them (as far as the state of society allowed it,) and their common passions would afford the same matter, more or less, for them. Nothing then remains, but the varied expression of thought to gratify that love of novelty which is also so common to man, and which induces the same changes in his expressions, which are the exterior exhibitions of his mind, as it does in his dress, which is that of his person. As society advances in refinement, these changes tend to its improvement : when that has arrived at its height, (so powerful is the love of change) they produce its degradation. Those observations must have been made a thousand times ; and

if there is any thing new in what I write, it must be in the mode of making and expressing them. Whether there is or not, I leave to you, O gentle reader, to determine.



DCXX.

IT seems difficult to conceive how happiness can be placed in the contemplation of that enjoyed by another, without any desire to participate in it ourselves; and yet we may take a pleasure in contemplating the happiness of another, and be content with that which the sentiment itself affords us; but is there not something forced in this content? It must surely be maintained by another hope, that of gaining the affections of a third object, to which the mind looks through the medium of the earthly one. For what higher contemplations, what more refined abstractions can there be, than those which religion suggests? —suggests, perhaps sometimes without our being conscious of them. If God has placed his “temple in ourselves,” it must surely be, that he may be adored there. How are we to separate all ideas of perfection, and consequently of adoration, from him who is the centre of it? Our regards must have an object, and if we withdraw them from ourselves, it must be to place them on him: that is, if they are such as are worthy of his acceptance. That acceptance then must be the ultimate object of our regards and our wishes.

Detail seems unnecessary to enforce what common feeling should itself suggest; but it is the defect of that, which detail is wanted to supply.

DCXXI.

DEISTICAL notions, and their counterpart, Unitarianism, must I think arise from our elevating the idea of power above all those of moral perfection—indeed almost exclusively, or at least independently. Does this proceed from the baseness of our nature, that wants to be awed into submission? Or is it our pride, that places that sentiment upon a throne, on which we may worship ourselves in it?

DCXXII.

IF we would be proud, let it be a generous, and not a selfish pride. To be proud of what is really worth it, can hardly be called pride. What did St. Paul “glory in?” All selfishness must be injurious to another: such is the indulgence of passion, even when another is the object of it; for self-love suggests it, and it is at variance with reason; both forbid its permanency, and both will change it into hatred, unless a better sentiment intervene.

DCXXIII.

THERE is a kind of self-indulgence, that by the languor and inactivity it throws us into, may secure us in some measure against the allurements of vice, but equally debars

us from a progress in virtue. It makes us discontented with ourselves, and all around us, except those who flatter and encourage our propensities by a false compassion for bodily infirmities, to which they in reality are not owing, or if the latter have any share in producing what we feel, it must be owing to the habits of self-indulgence which first brought them on, and to the mistaken pity and sympathy of those (who are too often our nearest relatives) who probably have been accessory, by the same indulgence, to their first beginning.



DCXXIV.

NOTHING is more selfish than human vanity : all its pursuits tend to its own gratification ; in its greatest efforts to promote the good of others, which it often makes in a manner that betrays itself, it has this in view ; and it will not scruple to make the most sacred observances subservient to the attainment of it. And what is the consequence ? It gains the outward applause of those whose interest it is to give it ; and if they are not also blinded by folly, they will join the more judicious and less interested, in the disapprobation and perhaps contempt with which they speak of it.

The vainest men are generally so dissatisfied with, or so conscious of their personal* claim to distinction, that they make out the deficiency by borrowing from others, as Scaliger did from the Scalas of Verona, to whom he pretended to be allied. Had he been content with what the world allowed to his erudition, he would have had much more consideration given him than he arrogated to himself. But he was probably as much laughed at as admired.

* *i. e.* The defects of it,

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DCXXV.

So much is required to humble our pride, and such is the encouragement it meets with in our passions, and in the incense offered to it by the world, that the strongest admonitions, and from the highest authority, would be insufficient to produce this humiliation, were not the misfortunes and adversities of life sometimes called to their aid, to remind us of what we are, and what we may be.

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DCXXVI.

To conciliate at once the respect and good will of mankind, is the highest satisfaction this world can give. This may be done by shewing a general civility and attention, even with a certain degree of reception and intercourse, but with that discrimination and occasional reserve which is due both to others and to ourselves. This will sufficiently mark our opinion of each individual; and those whom we receive from mere civility will be less likely to avail themselves of it, as their ill habits will meet with little encouragement, either from the countenance they receive from us, or from the society which their intercourse with us throws them into. This supposes, and must be confirmed by, that respect for ourselves that will ensure to us the esteem of all whose friendship is worth our cultivating, and which we shall feel ourselves that we deserve.

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DCXXVII.

IF the term of selfishness could be applied to patriotic

feelings, perhaps there never was a stronger instance given of it than in the American revolution ;—those of that people, in the ardour they shewed to emancipate themselves from their subjection to a country from which they originated, and by whom they had been assisted in their infancy and their growth ; those of the British nation, in their desire to retain under their dominion a people who had a claim to independence from the maturity they had arrived at, strengthened by the rigour with which the mother country exercised its authority over them, and by exactions for which the exercise of that authority was the chief foundation. When children are arrived at a certain age, they have a right to share in the enjoyments and privileges which the parents themselves possess, and to use that discretion in governing themselves, which they have attained the age of. If this cannot be done by a closer union, and on more equal terms, with the parent state, the connexion between them must be regulated by the distance which separates them ; a connexion which is more likely to be lasting, as it is founded on the rights and interests of both parties. The assertion of these ought to be founded on the general laws of nations.

The claim that a man asserts to judge and act for himself as a citizen of the world, must depend on his right to disregard the interests of his own country, when he considers the assertion of them as at variance with the justice due to another nation ; and he makes perhaps a still stronger assumption, in considering himself as being justified in detaching himself from those interests, in arrogating to himself a right to judge of the justice of them, and to act upon the judgment which he forms. Has he well weighed his qualifications for this ?

DCXXVIII.

“Leves dolores loquuntur : ingentes silent.”

CERTAINLY, in cases of real suffering; but in representation, whether dramatic or historical, there must be some expression, some description, some detail, to excite sympathy, and fix attention, unnatural as that expression appears when it comes from the sufferers themselves, especially when great bodily pain is added to their sufferings. We may blame, but still we admire and are moved: nor perhaps is there any other means of exciting thoroughly these sensations. Our feelings are too dull to allow us to make the case our own, without it is so represented; it is only in real cases, “*quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus*,” that the expression can and must be omitted, and the mind of the spectator left to its own interpretation of what it sees. Exceptions may be made of cases where the mind rises superior to the “*ingens dolor*,” and can explain what it feels; but there compassion is lost in admiration.

Whatever is labored cannot appear natural. Is it when a man endeavours to express what he feels, and to find consolation for those feelings, that we are to withhold compassion from him?

Do we require him to pay us the compliment of making us interpreters of his feelings, to submit his case as well to our intuition as to our compassion?—or do we think ourselves competent to judge of his feelings by that intuitive knowledge, which He “to whom all hearts are open” alone possesses? A proof of sincerity we may and must require; and this must be given in some exterior and sensible demonstration. Perhaps we are too apt to expect that pure and unmixed feeling which is incompatible with the complicated nature of man.

Strong description of natural feeling is the highest merit of a portraiture of human life.



DCXXIX.

THE comparison between virtue and vice is like that between gold and the baser metals : a little of one is of more weight than a great deal of the other.



DCXXX.

THE balance between good and evil is so nicely poised in this world, that the preponderance on the side of the former is perhaps little more than sufficient to save the world from the dreadful state it would be thrown into, if evil were to predominate.



DCXXXI.

WHERE is the medium between the slavish doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance, and the ungovernable principles of democratic license ? What is the state that will secure the subject's obedience to the laws, and prevent the Sovereign's abuse of them ? If such a medium and such a state is to be found, it must be in the English Constitution. Long may it continue !

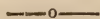


DCXXXII.

THERE are some books, of which, however amusing and even interesting they are, it may be said, that the quicker

we read, and the sooner we forget them, the better; but will they leave no impression behind them? If they do not, perhaps the greatest mischief they do is, the unfitting us for receiving any impression at all.

Among the books above alluded to, are those which insinuate that a man may act a double part, and yet still be an honest man. Such is the moral of the American "Spy." There seems to be a reputed sanctity in some human interests, that supersedes all the obligations of higher interests and laws. This "suprema lex" is in the objects of our own attachments. The Author of the "Spy" has made his hero ("Harvey Birch") place his honesty in taking money only from the enemies of his country, of course with a design to betray them; and he disgraced his friends by making them (at least their leader, General Washington) parties to his frauds. Query, from which did he deserve hanging most? Neither has the author consulted the credit of Washington more; for he has made him act the part of a weak and cruel man, in confirming the sentence of condemnation of a man whom he had every reason to believe innocent, from a personal inquiry which he had given himself the trouble of making. In short, the "tale" is made interesting at the expense of moral justice, and sometimes of probability and consistency. Will a sensible American thank the author for it?



DCXXXIII.

RELIGIOUS feeling, though by no means melancholy in itself, yet requires a seriousness that approaches to it, and which is produced by the united operation of reason and feeling. These cannot fail to lead to it.



DCXXXIV.

IF the doctrines and miracles of Christ failed of their effect on the Jews, they produced it in the Martyrs. The minds of the first were hardened by prejudice and pride. Those of the second were open to reason : they gave up all the enjoyments, and endured all the sufferings, which this world can produce, for all the happiness that the next has in store. That they were equal to this must be ascribed to more than common fortitude.



DCXXXV.

TRANSCENDENT as the joys of heaven are, beyond all possibility of human conception, and impossible as it is for us to conceive the mode (I do not say the merit) by which they are obtained ; what “ has not entered into the heart of man to conceive,” is felt by that heart with the highest hope and confidence of its reality. If we contemplate the bed of the dying Christian, and see his countenance beaming with the expression of all that is in perfect contrast with those vices and that hardness of feeling that excite our horror and aversion even more than our pity, we cannot doubt of the certainty that his hopes will be fulfilled ; unless we doubt also of the goodness and justice of God, and even of his existence ; for we deny him that, in denying him his attributes : without them he cannot exist.



DCXXXVI.

IT would be derogating from the object of our highest regard, to suppose that any other enjoyment but the

contemplation of that, was necessary to the happiness of a future life.

“ And shall not praise be His ? not human praise,
 “ While heaven’s high host on hallelujahs live ?”

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DCXXXVII.

WE cannot keep our minds constantly worked up to their highest pitch ; we cannot maintain those thoughts and feelings which it is capable of, and which alone will satisfy it ; but we can at times enjoy them, and the time will arrive when that enjoyment will be perfected, and made permanent.

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DCXXXVIII.

THE enjoyments of this life are to be had by fits and starts only ; but there is a more solid and lasting one which may accompany them all—Utility.

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DCXXXIX.

THE question between Theoretical Reformists and those who wish to preserve things in their present state, with occasional ameliorations, is the more difficult to settle, as the former judge from abstract ideas of their own of the degree of purity to which a Constitution may be brought, and make no allowances for the changes produced in society by the advance of civilization, prosperity, luxury, &c. and instead of setting one evil to counteract another (as must be done in all

human affairs,) and applying such remedies to abuses that may creep in, as the times will admit of, they would use such only as would suit the state of simplicity that existed before the advances above-mentioned had been made, or rather that exists only in their own imagination.



DCXL.

THE Epicureans, who made the enjoyment of present happiness the motive for a virtuous life, seem to have acted consistently with that, in excluding any expectations of future happiness, or even of existence in a life to come. But they forgot that it is that hope alone that constitutes the best part of the happiness of the present moment. Their object seems to have been to make us more satisfied with the enjoyments of the present life than we are capable of being made.



DCXLI.

THE thought of death is no doubt the best preparation for it, and, as Young says,—

“the sole victor of its dread.”

We may add with Cicero, “*cum illuc ex his vinculis emissi feremur, minus tardabitur cursus animorum;*” or, and we may add, *rectius dirigetur.*



DCXLII.

MANY are the advantages, both in governing others and ourselves, which are lost for want of patience.

 DCXLIII.

THERE is a point at which resignation must stop; that is, when we are called on to sacrifice our eternal interests; but to suppose that possible, would be to blaspheme against the mercy and justice of our Creator; to give up our trust in these would surely not be to “glorify God.” *

 DCXLIV.

HOW strongly do the partial, varying, and dubious obligations of the world, assure us of the equal, certain, and inviolable ones of the next! What we owe not to God, we cannot owe to man. But what we really owe to man we owe (and more) to God also.

 DCXLV.

ONE of our chief prayers ought to be, that our trials may be proportioned to our power of endurance, or rather to the power that will be given to us,

 DCXLVI.

IT seems to me, that the Calvinists, in adopting the doctrine of predestination, confound the pre-determination of

* This is meant to allude to a Spanish Saint Theresa, who is said to have made a solemn renunciation of her expectations of future happiness, that she might be virtuous and religious from disinterested motives.

God with his prescience : if we admit the latter, we must conclude that he foresees whom he may elect, to have mercy upon them, on the conditions that he has laid down : otherwise we must suppose that experience is necessary to guide him, or that he is influenced by the inclination of the moment, which would imply a versatility incompatible with his nature. He has stated the conditions on which he will pardon, viz. repentance and reformation : in this general statement, he has not particularized the cases or objects on which that pardon will be bestowed, but has reserved to himself to “ have mercy on whom he will have mercy :” a power which is assumed even by an earthly judge. If we are to add predestination,* it must be in regard to the merit or demerit of each object, in observing or violating the conditions he has laid down ; leaving to them the free-will of doing either.



DCXLVII.

WE cannot over-rate the power of God ; but we must remember that the exercise of that power is to be regulated by his other attributes of goodness, justice, &c. ; and it is but reasonable to suppose that in exercising his power, he would leave room for the exercise of the other attributes also. What room would there be for justice, if there were no discrimination to employ it ?—or what would be the character of that justice, if it was not tempered with mercy ? All the previous ordinations of God then must be in accordance with the exercise of all his attributes ; and if there is an appa-

* Or rather prescience.

rent sacrifice of any, it must be to preserve the equable proportions of them all. In this, as in other cases, as far as human practice can be carried, it is done with an endeavour to imitate God.

We are too apt to suppose, that God himself is bound by a necessity which he cannot free himself from ; and that in the qualities that compose his nature, there is an inherent essence (which in fact is his own essence) that he cannot alter. Indeed, if we ascribed this power to him, we should ascribe the power of self-annihilation. How then would he be eternal ?

While we allow every thing to emanate from God, we perhaps accompany that allowance with an idea that something emanates to him, from another source ; but where are those references to end ? Something must exist of itself ; and what can, but God ? The research of causes must be endless, till we can comprehend the existence and agency of a First Cause : our admittance of that, then, is a matter of necessity, more than of comprehension.

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DCXLVIII.

TRUE liberality is better expressed by the name of Charity : such charity as St. Paul describes.

—o—

DCXLIX.

THERE is only one character in which policy and principle may be said to be closely united ; that is, in the religious one. For the courage it inspires, let us look to the martyrs.



DCL.

THERE are some who have deserved so well of their country, and of mankind, that we are almost tempted to wish that they had some bodily or mental sufferings to awaken their feelings and give them those few, but most important virtues, which they seem to want, to make them truly estimable. These they cannot soar above, nor dispense with, with impunity.



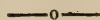
DCLI.

IF it was an objection to a maxim that it had some personal allusion, it would include every moral maxim that can be made; since there is none but has some, various and universal as are the faults of humanity, even in the greatest characters.



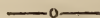
DCLII.

PERHAPS the convivial man has never been fairly and completely described: he has generally been too favorably or too unfavorably represented; the first by those who considered him as being free from austerity; the second by those who considered him as being disinclined to seriousness. Indeed, the character, like all other human objects, may be viewed in opposite lights.



DCLIII.

WE are the less able to judge of what may be called a state of grace,* as we are hardly able to distinguish those who may be said to be “not far from the kingdom of heaven.”



DCLIV.

IF there are some serious things of which we may be allowed to speak ludicrously, it must be when we allude, not to the use, but to the abuse of them.



DCLV.

LEVITY is sometimes a refuge from the gloom of seriousness: a man may whistle “for want of thought,” or from having too much of it.



DCLVI.

THE mind that would exert its powers to their utmost pitch will feel a pleasure in being greatly lost, as it is in considering the past, the present, and the future; the second is almost imperceptible from its littleness; the first

* Let not the illiberal worldling call this *cant*.

and last baffle all the powers of vision or conception by their immensity.

That there will be a time when time itself shall be no more, when a general judgment will take place, and when "the heavens and earth shall pass away," we are assured by the scriptures, and therefore must believe: when and how this will happen, we are totally unable to conceive; He in whose sight "a thousand years are but a day"—He, who, being himself infinite in duration as well as in extent of being, embraces the whole universe, and also pervades the minutest parts of it,—He alone can tell. He alone can tell when

"His suffering kingdom yet shall come."

To him all portions of time are alike; for none can bear any proportion to eternity. His will is always present, always effectual; for what he wills "is done."



DCLVII.

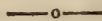
WE seem to overstrain our ideas of the power of God, when we suppose that he might have created a better order of things than he has done: we contract that power when we suppose that he is bound by those qualities that necessarily form his nature. If he can bring good out of evil, what matters it which he employs? or rather, perhaps, what power have we of discriminating between them? None, but what his instructions have given us, and that only relative to our own actions.



DCLVIII.

It is the more difficult to move us by declamations

against the practice of immoralities, as, to feel the effects of them, we must consider the admonitions as directed against ourselves; and this we are unwilling to do. But, weak and erring as we are, and liable to the impulse of our passions, who shall take the helm, when so many tempests assail us? Who? Look we not up on high?



DCLIX.

THE best claim we have to the mercy of our Creator (next to the atonement that has been made for us) is our acknowledging and feeling how much we stand in need of it.



DCLX.

THE best reason that we can have for desiring to obtain a competency and independence is, that we may avail ourselves of it, in making the best use we can of the faculties that are given to us, for the benefit of our fellow creatures and ourselves.



DCLXI.

THE lenity shewn by human laws must arise from a doubt of criminality, and a hope of reformation: the mercy shewn by God must be accompanied by a full knowledge of both.

If the justice of God were not tempered with mercy, would he have taken that means of satisfying it, in the sacrifice of his only son? Those who doubt of that sacrifice must consider how an equivalent must otherwise be

found. Are we to expect that the exercise of power should preclude that both of justice and mercy? What is the fact? That we are free agents, and that we have abused that free agency. The “*summum jus*” may be construed into untempered justice, which would be “*summa injuria*.” But justice, as well as mercy, must be consistent with itself, and neither must infringe upon the other. How well then have both been satisfied by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!

The disposition to obey the commands of God, and to believe in the bible, and all that it records, are inseparable from each other; for where else are those commands to be found? And if we trust to the authority of the bible in one instance, must we not in the other also? If, instead of that, we select from the bible only what suits our inclinations, we form a code for ourselves. God’s dealings with his creatures cannot be in the nature of a treaty or negociation with them: if it were a mutual contract, it would imply the possibility of violation on either side. Where then would be the ground for implicit confidence?—where the opinion of, and trust in, perfect integrity?



DCLXII.

ONE would think that by “*eluviones, exustionesque terrarum, quas accidere tempore certo necesse est*,” Cicero meant (in the “*Somnium Scipiones*”) something more than the common operations of nature; which, however, by “*ne diuturnam quidem gloriam*,” he appears not to have done.

What follows this,—“*qui ante nati sint? qui nec pauciores, et certe meliores fuerunt viri*,” reminds us of

Horace's "*Ætas parentum peior avis*," &c. Cicero and Horace appear to have been both "*laudatores temporis acti*."



DCLXIII.

IT is said that familiarity breeds contempt, but it may also be said that it breeds endearment; and this is no where more exemplified than in our attachment to our own homes. This prevents that unsatisfied desire after happiness that haunts us every where else. It has been said that we are happy every where but where we are not : and every place that pleases us by its beauty only suggests the idea of something still more beautiful :* but as the mind must have something to repose itself in, it recurs continually to the home it has been most used to. But as there is another and more lasting home to which it is destined, it becomes at last tired with the temporary one which it enjoys here, to which however it still clings, as not being yet fully prepared for another.



DCLXIV.

IN whatever light the mystery of our redemption is placed, it must still remain incomprehensible by us, nor can we expect either the necessity there was for it, or the manner in which it was affected to be made less so : all that we can reasonably expect is to have the truth of it ascertained by comprehensible and sufficient evidence ; and

* Our attempts to realize beauty by artificial representation, is a further proof of our imperfect satisfaction with every thing that we see.

this has been done: done sufficiently to require all the returns of gratitude, adoration, and obedience that we can give.

—o—

DCLXV.

ALL the relations that subsist between the creature and the Creator, if not totally different in their nature, must at least be infinitely superior in their degree, to any that can exist between man and man.

—o—

DCLXVI.

DURING the three years in which the object of Christ's mission was fulfilled, he lived in the abandonment of every comfort, ("not having where to lay his head") except the supreme one of doing "good," and finished it by a most painful and ignominious death. This was a "stumbling-block to the Jews," who expected a deliverer of a very different kind, and "foolishness to the Greeks," who saw nothing in it but the self-sacrifice of the Creator under a very abject form, to mend the work which himself had made; "but to the Christian, it was the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God:" power displayed, and at the same time sacrificed in the exercise of the highest degree of benevolence, ("Oh how Omnipotence was lost in Love!"*)—and wisdom shewn in the formation and execution of a plan which, however little we may comprehend it, required the exertion of those three attributes. The greatness of our

* Young's Night Thoughts.

Saviour's sufferings attest both the greatness of the object, and of what was required to answer it. The simplicity of the narration attests its truth.

DCLXVII.

WE cannot know what confidence we may put in our own powers, till we have made a thorough trial of them, and till we have ascertained how far they are equal to the subject we employ them upon.

DCLXVIII.

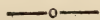
THE satisfaction that some people feel in the result of their thoughts upon serious subjects, seems to depend upon their filling up the intervals, between the recurrence of those thoughts, with action.* This affords them a sufficient diversion, whenever those thoughts begin to make them uneasy. Some thoughts afford a refuge from disquiet,—others oblige us to dissipate them by their giving it.

DCLXIX.

THE pain of dying I believe is often lessened, if not wholly removed by the senses becoming confused, and the mind losing the power of dwelling on its situation. Such may be the state of many a poor sailor, at the moment I write this, on the stormy night of Oct. 11, 1824.

* As being the result of those thoughts.

OCT. 12.—This morning shews what the last night's work has been : five vessels driven ashore on the Redcar Sands, one of them (a large merchantman) a perfect wreck ; above twenty more ashore in different parts of the Tee's mouth : happily but few lives lost, and many saved by the Redcar and other life-boats.



DCLXX.

THE means that we take to deserve the favor of God, are the means and the assurance of our obtaining it : we ask in sincerity and truth, and we shall have.



DCLXXI.

WE endeavour to persuade others that we do to them what they wish, and ourselves that we do towards them what we ought.



DCLXXII.

THERE are many things that we do, that are not so useful in their immediate objects as in their indirect tendencies, such as keeping journals, accounts, &c.



DCLXXIII.

THE man that decides for himself in rejecting what almost all others receive, has not shewn himself in one instance at least to be a "wise man : " he does not "know that he is a fool."

DCLXXIV.

How many events we may say we are on the eve of, without knowing whether they will happen on the morrow or not! The nearer the catastrophe approaches, the more uncertain it appears. We may indeed speak with some confidence of the final results; but when or how it will happen, we know not. This obliges us to regulate our conduct by the exigencies and the circumstances of the present moment, more perhaps with a view to the past than to the future. The one has determined what is, the effect of the other is reserved for what is to be: as we can only reason, so, we can only act "a posteriori;" ad futurum is mere speculation. Such is what is suggested by the present state of the contest between the Greeks and the Turks; and by the struggles that are made on both sides.

DCLXXV.

THE more a man is acquainted with a subject, the less he may be calculated to give information upon it. As it is familiar to him, he will speak of it as if it was almost as much so to the person he addresses, who perhaps knows little or nothing about it. Every man is not the best teller of his own tale. Such a one have I been just listening to.

DCLXXVI.

THOSE who admit the political necessity of religion without admitting its truth, can hardly be aware that they

impute to the Creator the promotion of the happiness and well-being of his creatures, by the means of a falsehood. Perhaps they will say that the same end is answered by other religions which are evidently false; (for we cannot surely allow the exclusive maxim of the Romish Church;) but they do not consider that if the Deity (for I am not supposing them to be Atheists) permits men to work in some instances their own way to Heaven; it is by systems that are far from having that strength both of moral and historical evidence which distinguishes Christianity from them all. But human pride is not satisfied unless it has a code of its own. How far is it competent to this, when it shews itself to be so defective a judge of another?



DCLXXVII.

HORACE'S "nil admirari" seems to be the description of a philosopher, but even the philosopher reserves his admiration for the sect and opinion he professes to follow. Horace would probably answer this by his

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,

"Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes."

But this is versatility; besides, it implies that he would be a magister himself, which too, he acknowledges in his

"——mihi res, non me rebus submittere conor."

So difficult is it to escape the toils of vanity.

Horace is more amiable in his confessions of weakness, as in his conversation with his servant Davus, and with Damasippus, &c. and still more so in his Palinodia—not the ironical one of

"Iam jam efficaci do manus scientiæ," &c.

but the more sincere one (as we may hope) of

“*Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens*

“ ——— nunc retrorsum

“*Vela dare,*” &c

Who that makes a friend of Horace (as every one does who reads him with pleasure) is not glad to see his friend in such a port as this?

When we are touched by the sentiments expressed by another, we make him “*nostræ partem animæ* :” does not this oblige us *quidquam* admirari?

—o—

DCLXXVIII.

THERE may be an emptiness in vanity; but the mind of man would be still emptier, if it were totally without it.* Perhaps Vanity under another shape may deserve a better name: when we tread on the extreme of one human feeling, we may approach the confines of another. Where is the pole that is most strongly attractive of them all? In religion; but even there the needle “trembles too.”

—o—

DCLXXIX.

THE proper construction, or modification of Horace’s *nil admirari*, appears to be what is meant by the common phrase of “not setting our hearts” upon any thing, that is, so regulating our affections as not to make the enjoyment

* Especially if “All is Vanity.”

of any thing a primary object, except of what will give us a pleasure on reflection, that is unallayed with any self-reproach.



DCLXXX.

IF we make a thing of real use to us, we make it our own : and to what does not our power of doing that extend ?



DCLXXXI.

WHAT a host a man must be in himself, to give him a right to be singular !



DCLXXXII.

IN the regulation of our dress and manners, we should consider whose approbation is worth having, as well as whose example is worth following. The general opinion will certainly assist us in this.



DCLXXXIII.

A MAN of principle looks at two sides of a thing, to see which is wrong and which is right : a man of the world turns it on every side, to see which he can make the most of.



DCLXXXIV.

How few are the spaces of time, however small they are, which we should wish to live over again ! Those who have that wish, are, generally speaking, more excited to it by the sense of not having spent the time well, than of having spent it happily. To those who look forward (and all that will can) the sense of past or present happiness suggests the expectation of higher in future ; the sense of decay, that of renovation.



DCLXXXV.

How uninteresting would be the follies of any one age, if antiquity did not give them consequence in the eyes of succeeding ones ! All however, that is connected with that wonderful creature man, must, in the eye of the Philosopher (who, as man, at once reveres and despises himself) have a most attractive interest.



DCLXXXVI.

THE ignorance of mankind assumes a consequence from the number of ideas and words which it has to express it.



DCLXXXVII.

THE filth of the Hottentots, and all the cleanliness of civilized nations, prove no more than this, that man is a

creature of habit : * the source indeed of that habit may be a matter of inquiry : perhaps the variety of nature is exhibited in this as in other instances : it may be expected to be greater where the passions and the varying degrees of mental ability take the place of instinct. The economy of nature too shews itself in the adaptation of these to the several parts they have to act : all together forming one great organic instrument, of which "man is the diapason."



DCLXXXVIII.

How much ideas are obliged to words ! or, how close is the connection between them : and what a brilliant figure do they make, when tricked out by vanity !



DCLXXXIX.

THE greatness of the human mind shews itself in the variety of ideas and opinions which it has to choose out of ; and its littleness, in the obstinacy with which it adheres to those it adopts ; adheres, often without the sanction of reason. It is obliged sometimes to play this little part, to avoid playing a still less.



DCXC.

How universal should we esteem the empire of chance, if reason did not convince us that there is no such thing.

* And we may add, of imitation.

—o—

DCXCI.

IF we are tempted to say, “such a one is an odd fellow,” how quickly do we make the return upon ourselves, in saying “but we are all odd fellows?” We all have our whims, all our “vitia;” and the “qui minimis urgetur” is now as much the sum of human praise (morally speaking) as it was in Horace’s time. The best remedy for these diseases of the mind (to him who is not “stultus et improbus” in saying “egomet mi ignosco” is suggested by the consciousness of them : this remedy indeed goes still further in its operation, for it applies even to our “secret faults ;” but no *human* dispensary will afford it.

—o—

DCXCII.

HUMAN laws may give us a right to the free disposal of the temporal goods we possess, but divine laws require that we should render an account of it.

—o—

DCXCIII.

THE best way of arguing with a hasty or positive man, is, not in directly opposing his opinion, but in a modified statement of the consequences that might arise from it. This may lead him into another train of reasoning, and is a sort of compliment to his ability, in affording him an opportunity of displaying it.



DCXCIV.

THE evidences for the truth of Christianity form the strongest trial of both the reason and the feelings of man, that can be made.

Deism must I think be considered as an approach at least to Atheism. The Deist may acknowledge a God, but it is a God of his own forming, invested with a majesty that is above all regard to such wretched creatures as we are. It is the God of the Epicurean system. If however the Deist acknowledges his existence, he must consider him as the Supreme Cause, from which every thing else emanates (if not, he must imagine something that is above him, as fate, necessity, &c.) and in this point of view, the necessity (which he probably will acknowledge) of some form of religion, and the evident superiority of the Christian to all others, ought to be irrefragable proofs with him of the truth of the latter. Indeed, if he attributes to the Supreme Being the qualities that are worthy of his nature, he must borrow them from the Gospel. Nor will his ignorance afford him any excuse for his opinions, for it gives him no right to form them: but it is not so gross as to deprive him either of the right or the obligation to judge of the evidences that attest the truth of Christianity; these he can comprehend, and by these, when fairly examined, he ought to be guided.



DCXCV.

THERE are qualities in human nature, that excite men to the commission of faults, and at the same time may

serve as an excuse for them. How far they are really so, can only be known by our Creator; but will not this explain much of the character and actions both of nations and individuals; and is it not good policy in those who have to deal with them, to favor these weaknesses, and not to imitate them? Will any thing be lost by that condescension? May there not be a compromise between those who wish to retain the possession of power, and those who are inclined to resist it? If public opinion is of any consequence, how much ought it to be consulted, before the "ultima ratio" is appealed to?

In all our dealings with mankind, we ought to be directed by general principles: if these are sound, they will apply to all cases whatever.



DCXCVI.

THE study of logic or of mathematics, if carried too far will make us pedants or dreamers; if totally neglected, they will leave us but little use of our reason or even our common sense, and will secure neither from perversion. The study of a science is of less consequence than the view with which is studied. Something more than mere memory is required; a scholar may "cap verses," without knowing much more of them than the syllables that are contained between the initial and final letters; without taste and judgment, he will have made but little improvement on the acquirements of a parrot.



DCXCVII.

THE "arbitrium popularis auræ" is the worst standard of

public opinion that can be resorted to. I do not mean the opinion that reasonable people, of every class in society, entertain and express; but the noisy and intemperate declamations, that vent themselves in taverns, spouting clubs, often at public meetings, &c. There, the worst passions are the instigators and prompters of those declamations; and the character and effect of them are fully displayed by the "most sweet voices" that utter them. Of what class in society these utterers are, is of little moment; suffice it, that by their conduct they level themselves with the lowest.

—o—

DCXCVIII.

As extremes meet in one point, that of liking will end in disliking, by the self-humiliation it will produce, in leaving nothing to compare ourselves advantageously with; some faulty part will then be necessary in the object of our greatest attachments.

—o—

DCXCIX.

WHEN we meet with persons who possess one good quality, especially an important one, we are sometimes apt to give them credit for others, which they do not possess. This is the case between masters and servants, principals and agents; and thus we disburthen ourselves of part of our responsibility and trouble, by throwing them on others who are not capable of fulfilling them.

—o—

DCC.

IN writing our thoughts, objections may, and probably

will be made to some of them, for being trite and obvious, which they may be to those who reflect, but to those who do not, they may never have occurred ; the mode of making them too is to be considered, as it may even justify repetition.

—o—

DCCI.

EXTREMES often meet : some people are impudent from want of intellect, others from having too much of it ; or it may make them dogmatical, which is the same thing. The connecting link in both is the want of proper feeling.

—o—

DCCII.

THOSE who trust to fortitude alone for their endurance of the troubles of life, forget that the best fortitude is in patience and resignation ; with these they have an armour which fortitude alone could not give : without either of them indeed it might lead to suicide.

—o—

DCCIII.

ONE generation succeeds another, and we witness those successions, till we ourselves are swept away, to make room for others. What would all this be, if it was only to fill the charnel houses of the dead ? But our reason and our feelings tell us another story, still better told in the scriptures.

DCCIV.

MEN are impelled to action either by the desire of adding to the satisfaction they feel in what they have already done ; or of drowning their self-reproach in some present gratification, or finally, of atoning for their past misconduct by their future endeavours. The greatest satisfaction we can enjoy, only excites us to seek for more, at least while the same faculties (the “mens” if not the “ætas”) remain to us. Turenne’s reply to Louis XIV. was dictated by the sense of having a higher duty to perform.* His obedience to his sovereign, or his sense of honour (which a severe moralist might call pride) however prevailed, and he fell a victim to it. It was not merely the “contempt of life” that he evinced : had he persisted in his refusal, he might not have appeared more “godlike” in the eyes of man, but how would his account have stood with his heavenly Master ?

DCCV.

KNOWLEDGE is of little use, without judgment and discretion in the application of it. It is perhaps rather a misfortune to know a thing with certainty, if it inclines us to assert it positively too, and without tolerance of the opinions of others. If “tot homines tot sententiæ”

* When Louis appointed him to the command of the war in the Palatinate, he replied, that there should be an interval between the life of a soldier and his death !

is in any degree true, we shall meet with continual difference of opinion ; and consequently, without tolerance, with continual occasions of dispute.

Nothing but the sense of our own defects can make us tolerate those of others. Without this mutual forbearance the world would be a scene of discord.



DCCVI.

THE desire of revenge is one of the most powerful of the passions. What would be the consequence of the general indulgence of it ? If the destruction of the human race, or at least of the happiness of society, then the prohibition of revenge is necessary for the preservation of one of these, if not of both ; and this prohibition we find in Christianity. We may feel indeed this desire, notwithstanding the prohibition ; but we also feel that we ought to check it : perhaps it will be said that the same end is answered by the experience of the ill effects of indulging revenge ; but is that sufficient to overcome the spirit of it ?



DCCVII.

“ NOTHING is certain but death and judgment,” says, wisely enough, the *gros bon sens* of the common proverb ; not even what we have experience * to guide us in ; for

* Experience teaches us what consequences the conduct we have followed has had ; but it cannot teach us what would have been the consequences of an opposite or different conduct ; though in many cases we may presume upon them.

unless the circumstances are exactly the same (which can hardly be supposed) between a past and a present case, the results may be different; under this uncertainty, we must be left to the decisions of our judgment, which is generally directed either by notions of our own or by some authorities to which we appeal, and which we apply according as the bias of our minds, the opinions we have contracted, our habits, &c. lead us, and in these perhaps no two will fully agree; so that if every individual was to have the power of determining for others as well as for himself, nothing but confusion would ensue; to prevent this, recourse is had to "the multitude of counsellors," in which "wisdom" is said to reside, and the majority of these must determine.



DCCVIII.

THE admission of an abstract principle, and its application to practice, are different matters; the "innocence of the dove" is alone required in the first; but the "wisdom of the serpent" must be mixed with it in the other.



DCCIX.

THE more I read of the Bible the more difficult I find it to reconcile to my reason all that it contains,* but

* A difficulty only to be overcome by a sense of the limited powers of our reason.

the more impossible I find it to reject, not only all, but any part of it, since the whole is so connected together, and has such intrinsic evidence to strengthen it.

The *humility* that is required for belief in the Scriptures is not an abandonment of reason, but a due estimation of its powers: the self-conceit then that refuses this belief, is the height of folly; and well might Young say—

“ Reason pursued is faith, and unpursued
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more.”



DCCX.

THE utmost reach of Philosophy ended in scepticism; for Doubt is the child of Ignorance. This Plato felt, when he wished for a teacher from Heaven, from “ the first good, first perfect, and first fair,” which must be the source of all intelligence, all animation, and which can have nothing beyond it. This teacher, long promised, both as Teacher and Redeemer, has been received by Christianity, but Philosophy still remains unsatisfied; and why? Because the *head* will not associate itself with the *heart*; or rather, because it must be dependent on it.



DCCXI.

IT is not by avoiding to treat of a subject which is liable to be misrepresented, that the interests of virtue and good feeling are best consulted, but by placing it in its proper light.—It is true that in so doing we may expose

ourselves to the scoffs of those whose feelings are blunted or perverted, or whose levity prevents their giving them their proper direction; but it is also true, that it gives occasion to those who are better disposed, and who will consider the subject more seriously and rationally, to vindicate a cause, in which virtue and vice, reason and folly may be said to be brought to close combat with each other, and upon a ground which both are interested in disputing. It is to these better dispositions that the appeal is to be made, when an author ventures to publish his sentiments, which he will not fear to do if he is conscious himself of the rectitude of them.



DCCXII.

IN the scriptures there is much to encourage, and much to alarm; and both of these are perfectly accordant with the natural feelings of those who have any sensibility, and whose sensibility is kept alive by reflection. That “the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” must be felt alike by all such, but what is that *spirit*, unless it is felt in its full force? And how is that force to be estimated, but by its *effects*?



DCCXIII.

Is it not the characteristic of true courage, to be totally separated from, and divested of pride? Where shall we find this courage but in the Christian Martyrs? What excited it? With what sentiments but those of

adoration could they regard the person of him whom they so imitated, and to whom they made such a sacrifice ; and shall we say that they followed a mistaken path, they who had the object so near in view, and were warmed with so near an approach to that flame, from both which we are at the distance of near 1800 years ? Is it not much more probable that those are now mistaken who would lessen the dignity of that object, and throw cold water on the flame, on the faith for which the Martyrs suffered ? Would Erasmus, when he expressed his fears, “ Ne Petrum imitaturus esset,” have sheltered himself under such pretexts ? No, no ! it is not our reason that we have to sacrifice, in giving the highest exaltation to the person of our Saviour ; it is the pride and the passions that prevent it. Will the “ Humanum est errare ” excuse this ?



DCCXIV.

MR. SOUTHEY, in one of his juvenile poems, (of which I hope and believe he has since been ashamed) says—

“ Go thou and seek the house of prayer ;
I to the woodlands will repair,
And find Religion there ! ”

Lord Bacon more rationally says,—

“ I have sought thee in courts, and fields, and gardens,
but I have found thee in thy temples.”

THAT is, not where the imagination and the passions are the most strongly excited, but where the feelings are the most deeply impressed.

DCCXV.

VANITY is so inseparable from our nature, that there is perhaps some mixture of it in the purest and best founded satisfaction that we can have with ourselves. Some men's heads are so full of knowledge, and at the same time so inflated with vanity, that it seems difficult to account for the emptiness which the latter implies in them, except indeed upon the principle of "*omnia vanitas.*" They are mere puff-balls, and seem to be themselves inebriated with the power of which they are full. If there is no *organ of vanity* in Craniology, it must be because the admission of that, in such subjects, would leave room for no other.

DCCXVI.

IT is a bad preparation for the "*Otium cum dignitate*" to have employed ourselves all the previous part of our lives in the *negotia cum vanitate*.

DCCXVII.

IF servility is tolerated in clever men, it must be on account of the sacrifice they make of their superiority to those whom they flatter. But they expect some return for this, and the only real one they receive is contempt.

Vanity almost becomes nobility,* when a clever man condescends to borrow his consequence from others who are his inferiors in mental endowments.—But respect, as well as charity, ought to begin at home.

—o—

DCCXVIII.

IF we shew more regard to the frivolous pursuits of the world, than they deserve, we shall more or less neglect the more serious and rational ones. We may gloss over the first, or think to atone for it by the attention we pay to the second, but in this we shall deceive ourselves, as well as incur the imputation of being insincere to others, and those whom we court will laugh at us; those whom we neglect, (whatever attention we may occasionally shew them) will distrust, and perhaps despise us; and we shall have to depend upon the candour of the world (which is not universal) for any credit given us for the good qualities we may really possess; still less may we reckon upon the approbation of our own conscience, whose voice we cannot always stifle.

—o—

DCCXIX.

WE cannot detract from what is due to others, without equally neglecting what is due to ourselves, nor can we pay more to some than is due to them, without paying less to others. If we brave the censure of the world,

* From the sacrifice it makes.

we shall only add the reproach of haughtiness and insensibility, to those we have already incurred.



DCCXX.

THE more of policy (worldly policy) there is in what regards men's conduct, the less is their sincerity to be depended upon. If it is a policy of their own making it is generally a very poor one. There is but one kind of policy (if it may be so called) that insures honesty.



DCCXXI.

WHAT excites our warmest feelings, what animates our most ardent desires, what encourages our dearest hopes, must necessarily be most interesting to us: what can have these effects, but Religion? Its promises could not engross all the affections of man, if they did not surpass all his conceptions; his reliance on them has the only sure support that can be given to it; for it must be founded on *humility*.



DCCXXII.

THERE seems to be one (and perhaps only one) unchangeable principle of union amongst all mankind; but that principle meets with so many jarring and counter-acting ones in this life, that it cannot be expected to have

its full and complete operation and effect till after death, in a life, of which it gives the best and most perfect assurance. Need I say that this is—*Love*?



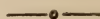
DCCXXIII.

It may be hoped, that when “the wheat is separated from the chaff, and gathered into the barn,” the smallest portion of grain that leavens the mass of human depravity will not be forgotten.



DCCXXIV.

THERE is no outward act of courtesy (or rather expression of good-will) that makes a nearer approach to sincerity, than the truly English custom of shaking hands.



DCCXXV.

THE want of thought seems in some people to be their best security against the abuse of it.



DCCXXVI.

THE curiosity of man far exceeds his power of satisfying it; the necessary result of this is, that no knowledge that he can attain, will be sufficient to set his mind at rest.



DCCXXVII.

THE esteem which we set upon good works, is more or less a compliment that we pay to ourselves for doing them; Faith, on the contrary, is both a security for the humility which Christianity enjoins, (as including a sense of our dependence) and also an assurance of the rewards it promises, on the condition of the good works that it enjoins.



DCCXXVIII.

THERE is a greater degree of presumption in the persuasion that we have had a "a call," or that we are any way distinguished by the peculiar favour of God, as it is incompatible with that state of probation that we have every reason to believe ourselves in during this life. Who has a right to say with St. Paul, "Henceforth let no man trouble me," &c.?



DCCXXIX.

THAT Man is an image of his God, is a truth of which a just observation of human nature must, I think, make us sensible; for we cannot carry our ideas of Divine perfection higher, than to suppose it an extension, infinite perhaps, of those qualities which human nature is capable of, and which we sometimes (and why should I not say

often?) see it possessed of; and when these are not fully displayed, surely there may be a germ, which, however, it is obscured or oppressed by baser qualities, is not meant to be wholly lost. And how often do the various discordances among mankind, the various accidents of life, the various (may I not say weaknesses?) of our nature, prevent the full display of the best qualities that individuals may possess! Will these be lost because they are not seen by human eyes?

— o —

DCCXXX.

WHEN we are tired and dissatisfied with the ordinary intercourse of society, and the many “straw-like trifles on life’s common stream,” we may find what is much more satisfactory in our own reflections; and ought it not to be so?

— o —

DCCXXXI.

IF we wanted a proof of the difficulty of obtaining a knowledge of ourselves, the different degrees of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that we feel with ourselves at different times, would of itself be a sufficient one. Perhaps the dependance of this upon the state of our animal spirits, may be one great obstacle to the thorough knowledge of ourselves; it is however none to the observance of the precept, “Watch and pray;” in which is included both the fulfilment of our responsibility, and the security for that fulfilment.



DCCXXXII.

ONE great source of our errors is, perhaps, our desire of being more satisfied with ourselves than our nature qualifies us to be.*



DCCXXXIII.

THE weaknesses of mankind have so strong a claim upon our compassion, that it hardly leaves us a right to be angry with them for their faults; still less when we consider the share which we have of them ourselves.



DCCXXXIV.

IF the frequent repetition of our prayers lessens their effect upon our minds, it must be owing to our want of sensibility; for if the prayers themselves become familiar to us, and have no longer the force of novelty, yet new occasions for them must continually arise, from the sense we must have (if we think and feel at all) and the experience of our frailties, wants, (which we are not able to supply ourselves) weaknesses, and infirmities, as well as from the various troubles to which life is exposed: for these, prayer alone, to a feeling mind, will afford any relief. Well does Young express this, when he says,

“From every storm that either frowns or falls,
What an asylum has the soul in prayer!”

* I mean in our enquiries into what we are enjoined to believe.

DCCXXXV.

WHATEVER disposition the best disposed minds may have (and surely they will have it) to believe in the truth of the Christian Doctrines, even they perhaps will feel a secret wish that a greater degree of comprehension could make that belief still more satisfactory to them, to set them and the question "at rest." And is not this part of the "warfare" that we have to go through?

DCCXXXVI.

"DIEU a fait l'homme leger et vain,

"Pour le rendre moins miserable."

Thoughtlessness and vanity may be means of alleviating human misery; but there may be another, and a better way of doing it. Those who have tried both, or who have taken the latter, will be able to determine this.

DCCXXXVII.

THERE is perhaps a degree of self-flattery, or at least of self-approbation, which is absolutely necessary to our mental enjoyment (the peace of our minds) and to our perseverance in any course that we have entered upon. At the same time it is what we have most to guard against,

for imperfect at the best as must be our knowledge of ourselves, the only security that we can have against the impulses of that self-confidence, which is almost sure to lead us into error, is, in its opposite, self distrust. How strongly does this shew the importance of what has been said unto all, Watch ! And he that said it, knew what is in all our hearts.



DCCXXXVIII.

It is hard to say in what various shapes selfishness may be exhibited ; but there is only one kind of it allowed, nay enjoined us here, the care of our own salvation. In attending to that, all other selfishness must be laid aside. This is the "Charity" that "begins at home," and from which all other charities must flow.



DCCXXXIX.

As we advance in life, we feel a satiety with all the enjoyments it affords, and we become less equal to the active occupations it requires : but our minds are not less capable of enjoyment, and (on the contrary) we wish for those of a more solid, and elevated kind. If then we have those desires, they surely were given to us (for nothing was given in vain) to prepare us for what we are to look forward to, as were the desires of our early youth. It may perhaps be said, that as the latter are generally found to be delusive, the former may be

so too; but we are to recollect, that the desires of our youth regard only the enjoyments of a transitory life, which is itself a preparation for one that is to last for ever. We have but then to look forward to that immortal existence, to enable us to indulge the same ardour of hope (a hope so much better founded) that we felt in our early youth: taking the proper means to render that better hope more and more secure. As we advance in life we wish for repose, but we wish for enjoyment too. If (as Jacob said) "the evil days are come in which we find no pleasure," it is because the objects immediately before us are not capable of giving it to us. The very sense of that want of pleasure implies this, for a state of apathy would not excite it.



DCCXL.

THE superiority of man over the brute creation is said to consist in the power of drawing consequences; and if we examine the powers of our minds we shall find that they increase in proportion to the ability to draw consequences, that is, to follow a train of inductive reasoning, and to express it in words. The latter may be considered in some degree as the measure of our comprehension; for what we cannot express, we cannot be said fully to understand: and this expression must be adequate and appropriate to the subject; in Metaphysics (for which it has been said there is no language) this cannot be the case: vain then are the attempts to form that decision of opinion upon subjects that are highly metaphysical (and what can be more so than

the mysteries of Religion ?) that requires a sufficient comprehension to sanction it.* It is by entering into that detailed explanation which implies a persuasion of that sanction, that disputes arise among those who discuss those subjects : each understands and views it in his own way, and will not submit to that acknowledgment of ignorance, that would be the best, and perhaps the only means of putting an end to all those disputes. Is not this applicable, among other things, to disputes upon Calvinism ?



DCCXLI.

THE necessity of good works, and of that faith which places our dependence elsewhere than on the merit of having performed them, are surely very compatible with each other. Still more, that faith presents to us the only proper object which can excite us to that performance ; if faith was a mere substitute for it, it would be barren indeed.



DCCXLII.

IF the language of reason is not adhered to, in treating of religious matters, it begets a suspicion of enthusiasm : but what is the language of reason, when applied to devotional feelings ?

* Is not this tacitly acknowledged by those who pretend to “ new lights ? ”



DCCXLIII.

I HOPE I am at peace with all mankind : how far I am so with God and myself, I cannot tell.



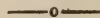
DCCXLIV.

IN Religion, there is enough to encourage a man's hope, to excite his endeavours, and to give him all but absolute certitude. If he had this, he would no longer be in a state of probation.



DCCXLV.

THE most laudable and most satisfactory improvement a man can make, is in religion, morals, and knowledge. He attains, perhaps, as much of these as his nature will admit of. Is it to be ended and lost in Death? Surely not.



DCCXLVI.

THE fear of punishment after death is necessary to restrain the bad ; the hope of reward to encourage the good, and to console the unfortunate. And are both delusive? Surely not.

DCCXLVII.

THERE never was a stronger, nor a truer picture drawn, than that in which Young represents the Almighty Being who created man “in his own image,” and made him “a little lower than the angels,” as

—————“A solitary God,
O’er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne,”

on the supposition that the creatures he has so formed, and to whom he has given such high hopes of immortality, are to perish everlastingly at their death; that there is,

—————“a disregard in heaven
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure.”

That we are “this moment” to

—————“gaze on God in man,
The next, lose man for ever in the dust.”

That there is

—————“no rock on which man’s tossing thought
Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it something to be born.”

that in short we are to

—————“admit a God,”

only to suppose him a destroyer, and a

“Blaster of hopes which he himself has given.”

Well we may end with

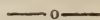
—————“This cannot be.”

And we are told from still higher authority, than the dictates of our reason, that this will not be.



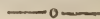
DCCXLVIII.

THE approach to animation which we see in vegetable life, prepares us for the reproduction of the same forms that succeed to those that have perished ; but the apparent want of action in the mineral kingdom, excites our surprise at seeing a regularity of form produced, which seems to indicate that the plastick hand of nature has there also been exercised ; and exercised, as in the rhomboidal form which we so often see given to a variety of substances, siliceous, argillaceous, calcareous, &c. where we are least induced to expect any thing like organization to take place ; but what, after all, does this prove, but that the hand of Providence works in all, and with a regular design, however slow, or however latent the progress of that work may be to our perceptions. It may indeed excite our curiosity to discover by what natural means these regular forms are occasionally produced in substances which more commonly are without them.



DCCXLIX.

IF our minds are not at ease, must it not be, partly at least, our own fault ?



DCCL.

IF it is true that every man is an epitome of all mankind, a complete knowledge of ourselves must in-

clude that of human nature, which indeed can only be arrived at by the other; for it is our own hearts alone that we can dive into the recesses of: the greatest knowledge however that we can attain, amounts to no more than what enjoins a distrust of ourselves: our "secret faults" will still be hid from us.



DCCLI.

LET a modest man be as content with himself as he will or can, there are times when he is tempted to envy the easy assurance of others. Perhaps it will be said, that this modesty is pride; and can we prevent this mixture of our feelings? Does it not make part of our "secret faults?"



DCCLII.

THERE are some regrets that find their alleviation in the thought of our sharing them with so many others; among these is our sense of the ill use we make of our time; but we must not trust too much to this.



DCCLIII.

THE responsibility of nations seems to be separated from that of individuals; the one to be judged of in this world, the other in the next.



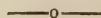
DCCLIV.

CERTITUDE implies present attainment: a state of expectation must be a state of suspense, and consequently of incertitude; but this expectation must be founded on probability.



DCCLV.

EASE is the great wish of the human mind; the Roman Catholic Church offers it to its votaries, but submission to its dictates is the price; its pretence to infallibility will not allow of a higher appeal; unless as being the source from whence that infallibility proceeds.



DCCLVI.

It would be difficult, not to say impossible, for us to conceive a higher power in the Divine mind to judge of future events than what is possessed by men in forming probable conjectures, unless we made that superiority of power amount to certain knowledge. But if we make that previous knowledge the result of pre-determination, it would only exist in the Divine mind as the necessary concomitant of the exercise of

power, and, with all the other attributes of the Deity, it would be entirely subordinate to that. It would be merely to himself, that God would be just, merciful, &c. Where then would be the call for human gratitude to that Being who is described as "long suffering, slow to anger, and of great goodness!" &c. Could not God, in the creation of subordinate beings, leave room for the exercise of those attributes which entitle him to be loved as well as feared? Must his very Omnipotence subject him to a necessity, which is to result from the exercise of it? Must he be denied that free-will which we are told he has given to us his creatures? And is there one paramount necessity, which, like Homer's book of Fate, is to determine the actions and decrees both of God and man? Allowing, at the same time, the inconceivable paradox (as above stated) of the Omnipotence of God, in union with the necessity which results from the very exercise of it.



DCCLVII.

A MAN who knows not how to be generous, will hardly know how to be just; for generosity is only an extension of justice: indeed they reciprocally determine each other: for he who is more than generous, is not just to himself; want of prudence shews itself in him, as an unfeeling selfishness does in the other.



DCCLVIII.

THOSE who think much, find this inconvenience in it; they feel a difficulty in satisfying themselves respecting

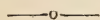
the objects on which their thoughts are employed, especially if they are of an abstruse nature; and if their importance is in proportion to their abstruseness, they feel at least an equal dissatisfaction with themselves; and all the arguments they may bring in favor of the opinions which they hold, or wish to hold, are perhaps as much suggested by the desire of confirming themselves in them (a desire excited by a feeling of want) as of overcoming any opposition they may meet with in the opinions of others. The more deeply we reflect on many subjects, the more difficult, (to say the least,) we find it to be, to form an absolutely decisive opinion (in this case indeed, it would no longer be opinion, but certitude) upon them. The decision we form is only the result of a comparison between two opposite opinions, upon a case of which we can only have that partial knowledge upon which each opinion is grounded. Add to this, that the opposition of the two opinions (allowing a degree of plausibility to each) is itself a proof of the imperfect knowledge on which each is founded.



DCCLIX.

OBJECTS of sense must depend for the pleasure they give to us, on the state of our senses, and on their fitness to enjoy it. Age, and the frequent repetition of that enjoyment, of course lessen that fitness. The satiety produced by the latter, particularly shows itself in the desire we have for novelty, which indeed may be compared to that state of our bodies, in which the

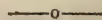
appetite requires to be stimulated by new or high-seasoned dishes. But in all these, the mind still reserves to itself an independence, and a power of action and of enjoyment, which only requires higher and more solid objects to excite and to satisfy it. Those of nature are more peculiarly calculated to have that effect, from their immediate connection with the highest of all, as well as from their continual variety and their congeniality with our internal feelings. Surely these properties and privileges of the mind shew it to be distinct from, and superior to, any thing belonging to the body; and the more, as the former often manifest themselves, unaffected by the decay of the latter, to the very moment in which all our earthly faculties and enjoyments are extinguished in Death.



DCCLX.

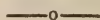
It is the peculiar characteristic of man, to look forward in youth (as I have said before); he does this with all the ardour of hope, to whatever prospects in life his views are directed; and he does it the more, in proportion to the consciousness he feels of his ability to improve and make himself useful to society; and if his head and heart are rightly disposed, he will have also the far more important and exalted motive of gaining the approbation of his Maker, and thus “increasing in favor both with God and man:” what but the “sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,” can excite and encourage these expectations and endeavours? Given to him they must have been; and for what other purpose can they have been given? In this as in many other works of the Creator,

the final end is clear, however obscure the efficient means may be: clear, as the fullest display of all the attributes of God, and as all the impressions that our reason and our feelings are capable of receiving, can make it.



DCCLXI.

A VARIETY of opinions seems to have been meant to be allowed to men; and to be, in a certain degree, disconnected with their responsibility.* If this is the case, can we wonder that these different opinions (and on the most important subjects) should admit of that defence which precludes both the power of absolute refutation, and the right of determining the merit or demerit of those who hold them?



DCCLXII.

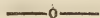
REASON cannot be perfectly satisfied with what it does not comprehend; but there are matters, in which this want of satisfaction may be supplied by the feelings; so it is in Religion, which addresses itself to both. If reason was perfectly satisfied, there would be no operation on the feelings, or at least, not of that sort and degree, that would not interfere with our free-agency, or with that trial of our feelings, which depends upon our having the power over them that free-agency supposes. Without that free-agency, or at least a sufficient degree of it, (for every thing in human nature is limited,) there can be no responsibility.

* Of which, "he that judgeth, is the Lord."



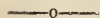
DCCLXIII.

How little difference there is in point of time (none in point of necessity) between what does happen, and what must happen !



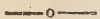
DCCLXIV.

ARE not the alloys which natural feeling meets with here, an earnest of future feelings, which will be exempt from those alloys ? Why else should we be sensible of both the feelings and their imperfection ?



DCCLXV.

IF we are to judge of things by comparison (and what better mode can we have of judging of them ?) how greatly does it add to the importance, sanctity, and truth of the Christian Religion, to consider it at its first promulgation, in opposition both to the licentious idolatry of the heathens, and the profaned and vitiated religion of the Jews !



DCCLXVI.

EVERY object, or groupe of objects, in nature, suggests to the painter's imagination a new creation for him to

form, on the representation of what he sees : every change of the atmosphere touches a string in his feelings that responds to the effect produced in nature. In partaking of these indeed, every observer and lover of nature may have (to a certain degree at least,) a painter's eye and mind, though the hand may be wanting to execute what the eye sees, and the mind feels.

————— “ *pictoribus atque poetis*

Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas.”

says Horace; but there must be also the *judicandi*, the *eligendi*, the *cernendi potestas*, to regulate this; without these it will only at best be, “ *magnis excidere ausis.*”

—————
DCCLXVII.

APPARENT modesty is often only a court paid to the vanity of others; and the return made to it but little more than an acknowledgment of the justice of the compliment paid to them. Merit must make its way by flattery, unless indeed an example is set by others in the encouragement of it, which our vanity is interested in following. A man must do more than justice to others, to be entitled to do justice to himself.

This, however, like all others, is but a partial description of human nature.

—————
DCCLXVIII.

To be sensible of a man's virtues, we must compare them with his faults: a purely virtuous character would

have a sort of spontaneity in it, that would take away half its merit, that is, in our eyes.



DCCLXIX.

THE only way by which we can arrive at any conception of the divine perfection, is by a sense of our own unworthiness; we must look through a dark medium to enable us to contemplate the brightness of the sun.



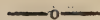
DCCLXX.

THE transition from thought to thought, and from folly to folly, are equal proofs of the general connection that reigns throughout; and, opposite as these directions seem to be, their extremes will meet in one point: unjust as was Festus's reproach to St. Paul, that "much learning had made him mad," he would hardly have said it, if he had not been aware of the possibility of such a case occurring.



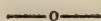
DCCLXXI.

SHALL I be accused of a play upon words, when I say that from St. Paul's observation, that "we see and know in part only," it follows that all our views and ideas must be partial?



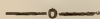
DCCLXXII.

IF a man thinks at all, his thoughts must be worth communicating, either to instruct or to be corrected; "Si quid novisti rectius istis," is an appeal that every one must make.



DCCLXXIII.

A MAN may oftener have it in his power to speak, than to act for himself. "Noscitur a sociis," quia ducitur a sociis.



DCCLXXIV.

IN St. Paul's Epistles, plain and evident meanings appear often as it were by starts, amidst a crowd of obscure and confused images and phrases. His language is as mysterious as the subject on which it is written: and the different parts of his writings on that subject contribute little to the illustration of each other: but there is a connection and uniformity throughout them, that leaves an awful impression on the mind, enforced by the authoritative manner in which they are delivered, though they give a very imperfect information to the understanding.--His appeals to the feelings of his readers, and to the sacred writings, are very forcible, and the more, as they appear to come from the dictates of his own heart.

DCCLXXV.

DESULTORINESS may often be the mark of a full head; connection must proceed from a thoughtful one.

DCCLXXVI.

To know whether a thing is of consequence or not; is to know the consequences that will follow it; how necessarily does this carry our views forward to the period when all consequences will terminate and be absorbed in one that is to last for ever!

DCCLXXVII.

INFINITE comprehension can alone embrace (or be commensurate with) Infinity; and what conception can we form of either? But what are these terms of comprehension, mensuration, &c. applied to what is capable of neither? When we speak of him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," should we not rather say in whom all things have their existence? But the other is "*magis ad nos*," and therefore used.

DCCLXXVIII.

THE deepest gloom that can be thrown upon the

prospects of this life, may be a prelude to the brightest sunshine in the next. This hope, and this alone, can "cheer with smiles the bed of death."



DCCLXXIX.

THE stimulus which Christianity gives to its followers to labour in its defence, is one proof of its excellence and truth; the success of their labours is a confirmation of it, and that they have not laboured in vain.



DCCLXXX.

THE performance of his duty is the object of God's attention in man; the manner in which he performs it, whether agreeably to their notions, habits, &c. is that of his fellow creatures. The first will force their esteem, but it must be the latter that will gain their affections.



DCCLXXXI.

IN praising or blaming others, we often only make our own encomium.

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DCCLXXXII.

MAY not we say that our powers of discussion are as great as our powers of conclusion are small?

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DCCLXXXIII.

THE means of concealing villainy, especially the crime of Murder, in all its shapes, are so various, and seem to promise such success, that it can only be attributed to the Divine justice, that a discovery is almost sure sooner or later to overtake them.

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DCCLXXXIV.

FEELING is necessary to expression, but expression does not always go hand in hand with feeling.

—o—

DCCLXXXV.

MEDIOCRITY will hardly be allowed to whatever is susceptible of excellence. “Mediocrity of imitation is tolerable in middling things, but not at all in great.”

Does not this arise from the different degrees of importance that we attach to the originals?

DCCLXXXVI.

A MIND that is accustomed to reflect on itself, cannot well feel any great degree of exhilaration, without feeling at the same time how imperfect that exhilaration is, and how far short of what both its desires and its capacities require to satisfy it. The prospect however of future improvement and a reliance on the Power which alone can realise that prospect, will induce and enable it to enjoy and be thankful for what it now feels; which indeed * they are necessary to give "heart and substance" to.

DCCLXXXVII.

IF a wicked and immoral man has any feeling of remorse for his wickedness (and if he has not, he may justly be considered as hardened) he will also feel a wish and hope that God will forgive him; and how forgive him? not by suffering him to go on in his wickedness, for that is done by many a sinner; but by shewing mercy to him at the day of judgment; and is not this feeling a proof that that day will come? Shall we not consider the universality of this feeling, and the necessity of its influence (more or less) on mankind, as a proof that it is founded on an expectation that will be realized, in the certainty of a future existence?

"Thereafter as a man feareth," &c.

* i. e. That "prospect and reliance."



DCCLXXXVIII.

“*SPERM longam reseca*”—transfer potius; quod aventi
Præsens vita negat, vita futura dabit.

“Abridge your hopes,” nay, rather raise them high;
What this life wants, another will supply.



DCCLXXXIX.

WE shall be more lenient to the faults of our fellow creatures, if we are aware that their exemption from them depends often perhaps at least as much upon the clearness of their heads, as upon the goodness of their hearts.



DCCXC.

WAS not the first incitement to the study of natural philosophy the conviction that every effect must have its cause? Apply this to the principle of the syphon, in which, as in other cases, observation must probably have preceded enquiry.



DCCXCI.

THE sources of our sorrows we know by experience: the sources of our consolation we can only know by faith and by hope.



DCCXCII.

IF every one knew his exact place in society, and uniformly kept it, there would be no occasion either for simulation or reserve; but the misfortune is, that we can neither be sure of others, nor of ourselves: we are therefore obliged to be on our guard against both.



DCCXCIII.

ARISTOTLE'S unwillingness (which too it appears that he could not satisfy himself in) to allow that mankind had any beginning, seems to have arisen from the difficulty of conceiving a first creation; but he did not perhaps consider that that difficulty is by no means removed, nor even lessened, by supposing that things have been at all times (in respect to mere existence) as they now are; for that existence from all eternity, and without a primary cause, is still to be accounted for; and making such a subordinate and imperfect a creature as man, the cause of his own existence, is very unsatisfactory and unreasonable indeed. Primary and universal causation requires all the attributes that constitute perfection, (power, wisdom, &c.) to legalise it, (if I may so say,) and what efficiency can there be in those qualities, if they exist only in the abstract? If they are attributes, they must be attributed to some Being to give them effect as causes.

The human mind appears to betray both its own vanity and indolence, when it has recourse to assumptions.

The greatest exercise that seems to be allowed to it, is in finding a good reason for believing what it cannot comprehend.



DCCXCIV.

THERE are things that we may abstain from considering, on account of their being above the reach of our reason, but which, when we do consider them, we cannot refuse to admit the truth and importance of. Shall we say then, that we abstain from considering them, because we are unwilling to admit the truth of what we cannot comprehend? or shall we not rather say, that we prefer a reference to our feelings, for the admission of truths, which may be impressed upon them much more easily than they can upon our reason. An impression upon it must be made through the medium of intelligence.



DCCXCV.

How much are we at the mercy of our own impulses! and how many (to say the least) are the things that we do more from inclination than from choice!



DCCXCVI.

A SPLENETIC observer of mankind might say, that one half of them are employed in committing errors, and the other half in blaming them; and perhaps doing the same

themselves. The world however goes on, and some evils correct themselves, or balance each other; and a merciful Providence (*qui ut omnia videat et multa saltem provideat necesse est*) frequently interposes to save those from destruction who err from want of judgment, more than from intention. This interposition may not be visible, but it is surely inferable, from the wisdom and benevolence of Providence, and the blindness and weakness of mankind.



DCCXCVII.

HUMANITY and policy may be sometimes at variance, for either may be carried too far: one part of mankind impels the other by crying out "*fiat Justitia*," without perhaps thinking of the "*ruat cœlum*" or at least of the "*ruat salus publica*" that will or may follow. A man cannot feel himself till he exerts himself. The stone must be put in motion, and then

"*Vires acquirit eundo.*"



DCCXCVIII.

GENERAL conclusions we are able to form, and justified in forming, for they are necessary to the regulation of our conduct, and the reasonable satisfaction of our own minds; but the particular application of them is often out of our power, for we are not authorised to judge of others, nor competent to judge ourselves: "*I judge not mine own self,*" &c. says St. Paul.

DCCXCIX.

IF the feelings of mankind are concerned (as they surely are) in the investigation of religious truths, those feelings deserve the attention of Philosophers, as much as the exercise of their reason does. But do they meet with that attention? Perhaps the Philosopher will say "they meet with as much as they deserve; but with their variety and mutability, their liability to be influenced by a number of moral and physical causes, &c. how can they be admitted as tests of truth?" But you allow (at least you cannot deny) that they are materially concerned in the examination of religious truths; your reason then for rejecting their evidence I think amounts to a confession, that Philosophy is itself incompetent to discuss the question.

DCCC.

"HE will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." It is not for man to determine how or where this mercy will be shewn; for man cannot attain the knowledge which determines the will of the supreme Being; but surely mercy will be shewn, and as surely there will be objects to exercise it upon; for the attribute must exist in a Being of absolute power and perfection; and of what avail would the possession, without the exercise of it be? And on what objects can it be exercised, but on those whose hopes or fears anticipate the judgment they will receive? Those feelings indeed

may not be a sure criterion of that judgment: for they may be modified by self-delusion, or morbid affection; but he who is wholly without them, must either have the folly of an ideot, or the insensibility of a brute, or the ferocious courage of a hardened sinner.

—o—

DCCCI.

IT seems to be the character and object of Scepticism, to leave in doubt its own opinions, as well as those which it professes to doubt of.

—o—

DCCCII.

HE who has created can destroy; he who can destroy can renovate; let nothing then be supposed impossible to the Being, who is himself the source, and whose fiat is the cause of all existence.

—o—

DCCCIII.

WE must know what is "given," before we can know what will be "required;" and as we cannot do the one, so neither can we do the other. As far indeed as worldly estimation goes, perhaps we may; but as the purposes of that estimation are comparatively trifling and insignificant, so must its powers be; and all the importance they can really have must be in the "issues" of another life; and there our views can penetrate no further than to what is necessary to direct our conduct in this.



DCCCIV.

THIS world is left to the “chances” and Changes that time necessarily brings about ; The

“Tempora mutantur, noset mutamur in illis”

must happen to us all ; what the succession or occurrence of these may produce, it is impossible to say ; we may fear it will not be for the better ; but we may also presume, that God will not be “extreme to mark what is done amiss” by us his creatures, in consequence of the temptations, various as they may be, which these changes and chances may subject us to, and by which what is “given to and required of” each, must in some degree be modified.



DCCCIV.

WE are apt to think that questions are made too general, because we wish them to be confined to what properly belongs to the subject under consideration ; for these are in fact the bounds of our own intellect ; we can view them only in part,* and we forget that as all is connected, so they are connected with all : which is far beyond the reach of our comprehension.

* As to their immediate relations.

DCCCVI

IN regulating our opinions upon abstruse subjects, we should consider the degree of evidence that they are capable of, and recollect that the arguments for or against them, must bear a certain proportion to each other, and we should not judge of them by a comparison with the evidence which subjects of less obscurity will admit of. Slight probabilities, and remote analogies, may have as much weight in relation to obscure subjects, as stronger and more immediate ones may have upon those that are more demonstrable, especially if they concur with each other, so as to produce a mass of evidence. This rule may be of use in the most important cases.

DCCCVII.

WHAT a total sacrifice of reason there is in the "Credo quia impossibile est!" Such a creed must surely be considered not as a fair representation of faith, but as a Caricature of it, meant to make it ridiculous. A man who can sincerely adopt it, must glory in making a fool of himself, and must think that the highest respect that can be paid to religious faith, is in disgracing it.

DCCCVIII.

EVERY accession of knowledge is a stimulus to further pursuit, because it shews that much yet remains behind :

imperfect knowledge must be imperfect satisfaction; a sense of ignorance must be a sense of doubt, or at least of suspense. We should pray with unsatisfied desires; —those satisfied, we laud only.

—o—

DCCCIX.

THERE is an epithet that appears to me to be a better description of worth in the youths of all classes in society, than the partial application generally made of it, seems to imply an admission of; which is, that of being a steady young man: and what is it that gives the best title to this description? The proper use of thought.

—o—

DCCCX.

As long as there are different degrees of understanding among men, and as their understandings are influenced by their passions, so long it will be impossible to make them agree upon any subject that requires a right understanding and feeling to judge of it.

—o—

DCCCXI.

ALL our efforts to free ourselves from sin, must be founded on a sense of our liability to it; and this must exclude, or at least limit self-satisfaction.

—o—

DCCCXII.

WANT of personal courage is not unfrequently made up for by obstinate adherence to opinion, which may arise from a jealous apprehension that others will avail themselves of a weakness of which we shew ourselves to be conscious; while on the other hand, the consciousness of personal courage often seems to beget in us an equal apprehension that we shall avail ourselves too much of it, in opposing our opinions to those of others. Thus, whether this confidence and diffidence are misplaced or not, the two opposite characters are brought nearer to a level with each other, and various purposes of human life are answered, among which the trial of our patience is not the least important.

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DCCCXIII.

WHEN we consider the proofs of the immortality of the soul, we are convinced of the truth of it; but when this attention is suspended, or directed immediately to the object itself, the impossibility of our conceiving it, throws us back into a sort of doubt, which can only be dispelled by the renewal of our first attention and our efforts.

—o—

DCCCXIV.

If God is infinite (as he surely is) his action must be infinite too; and he must have infinite space, (if we may use a term which we can so little define) to act in.

— o —

DCCCXV.

WHAT idea can we form of a Being, who is infinite, and at the same time is no where greater than in the smallest of his works? How can we consider infinity, but as being as much displayed in diminution as in extension? Or rather as being equally capable of both, or of neither;* for how can the greatest or the smallest objects be compared with infinity? But what do we mean by the greatest or the smallest? Is it not the greatest or the smallest that we can conceive? But on what do our conceptions depend? Is it not upon the evidence of our senses? and what is the extent of the information they give us?

— o —

DCCCXVI.

PERFECT satisfaction (which is the natural wish of the human mind) cannot be attained by any knowledge that it can acquire, it must then “wait the great teacher Death — and God adore,” but at the same time not consider itself as wholly uninstructed, nor as irresponsible for the use of the instruction it has received.

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DCCCXVII.

THE greatest happiness that we can have in any enjoyment that the mind is susceptible of, is in referring

* Infinity neither admits of extension or diminution; both are comparative, and infinity admits of no comparison.

to the source from whence it comes; the bounty of Providence which gives it, and enables us to receive it. The pleasure of this reference is the greater from the expectation and hope it encourages.



DCCCXVIII.

I AM inclined to think, that there are two kind (may I say only?) of people who do not relish “Young’s Night Thoughts,” those who do not want them, and those who cannot feel them.



DCCCXIX.

I HAVE said that Young’s Poem is a noble paraphrase of the Scriptures, which I think is true, as to the substantial parts of the Poem, its arguments in favour of the immortality of the soul, and the importance of the means of ensuring its future happiness: The flights, and sometimes the obscurities that Young’s imagination carries him into, must not be considered as entitled to the same praise, however they may shew the force of his genius. But there are few perhaps that a little attention may not make intelligible, and even his redundancies have their force. As to the gloom of the poem (Young himself calls it a “Gloomy Song,”) surely that is a frivolous as well as unfounded objection: its force and animation throws sufficient lustre on its gloom, and its representations of the vanities of this life are only serious truths. Poor indeed are the objections of some French

Critics, such as Baron Grimm, &c. — But that nation in general does him justice, as well as the feeling readers of ours.



DCCCXX.

ONE great obstacle to the reconciliation of quarrels in society, is perhaps the difficulty of making them up on equal terms between the parties: but should not the “exchange of forgiveness” (for when is it not wanted?) remove this difficulty?

It seems the more proper that disputes between Nations should be decided by force of arms, as justice is often out of the question on both sides.



DCCCXXI.

To encourage the good, to fix the doubtful, and to check the bad, are the great ends of our leading an exemplary and useful life.



DCCCXXII:

THE difference between the Greek epitaph and that by Lord Palmerston (Neale's Views of Seats, Vol. 2 Broadlands, Hampshire) is, that the Pagan could only bid the earth lie light upon the buried object of his affections and regrets: the Christian resigns her to his God: to him who was his Creator, and who

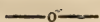
has bid him place his dependance, and repose his hope, where his feelings and his sufferings are known and compassionated, and where they will receive their compensation.

DCCCXXIII.

A CHAIN of inductive reasoning is as convincing as any reasoning can be; because a connected series of consequences that necessarily flow from each other, must tend to support and strengthen each other, more than any single proposition can do by itself, unless it is self-evident: but to feel this strength, it is necessary that the mind should take in the whole chain of reasoning, which it is not always equally prepared to do, and instead of that, it is apt to consider the different parts of the chain separately, and so to puzzle itself by considering propositions that may in themselves be more or less disputable.

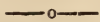
DCCCXXIV.

THE stronger a man's mind is, the more likely he is to be governed by his own prejudices. Strength of mind, as the term is commonly used, does not always mean or imply strength of judgment. Is this because we are apt to make the term synonymous with obstinacy?



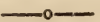
DCCCXXV.

OUR short existence here can be no other than a preparation for an eternal existence hereafter; every thing must have its final cause; and what final cause can there be, adequate to the effect produced, for our existence in this world, if it is to terminate in annihilation? But how are our imperfections and unworthiness to prepare us for that future existence? How, but by the deficiency being filled up by the mercies of God upon the conditions declared in the Scriptures?



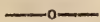
DCCCXXVI.

LIFE is full of solitudes; and the greatest of them all is respecting what is to come after it. Is this given only to produce present suffering? Surely not.



DCCCXXVII.

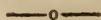
IF man may be allowed to indulge any pride, it must be in his capacity to know and feel that he is but a worm; for how can he know that, but by a comparison of his own abject state with the Power that made him what he is?



DCCCXXVIII.

BELIEF of what we cannot comprehend must perhaps necessarily be imperfect, and in spite of our wishes, in spite even of that evidence that should determine opi-

nion, we may still have our moments of wavering and of doubt; this to a feeling mind is its own punishment, and must subsist till we can "know as we are known:" it is part of the battle we have to fight, and if we so consider it, we shall hardly hesitate on which side to array ourselves: shall we fly from it to dissipation? If we succeed in this, we shall gain little by the change from painful thoughts to heedless insensibility: let us then rather seek for the remedy in the disease itself (if it is one) with the recourse to that reason which, as our best faculty, was surely given us for the best purposes; it will afford us consolation and encouragement,* however it may be embarrassed by that maze of perplexities which it is unequal to the thorough development of.



DCCCXXIX.

It is the more difficult to regulate our opinion of things of an abstruse nature, as the powers that are given to the human mind, create in it a desire of having a degree of information sufficient to satisfy the curiosity excited by the sense of those powers,† and we are apt to suspect that those who entertain a decided opinion upon these matters, whether favorable or not, have not made all the use of their mental powers which the subject required. Thus we remain in a state of doubt, waiting for further satisfaction, which we might perhaps obtain by our own efforts.

* With the assistance which has been given to it.

† But greater than we find them able to attain.

DCCCXXX.

THE happiness of this world deserves little more than the name of amusement: the greatest happiness that the mind is capable of, is when the enjoyment of our existence is mixed with the thoughts of that which is to come. It is only of this, that an *intimate* feeling can be had.*

DCCCXXXI.

THE excellence of government seems to consist in overcoming difficulties (or what the world esteems as such) by a skill and judgment superior to them. Shall we say this of God's government of the world? But what can be difficult to the first and supreme Cause of all things?

DCCCXXXII.

SPACE is infinite; God is infinite; infinite power must have a commensurate field (if any mensuration may be here allowed) to act in, and the effect of that action must be proportionate. Why then should we be staggered with the prodigious number of intelligent beings that are born and die daily, to pass to another life, in the universe (probably) of which our earth makes so small a part? But (the sceptic will say) does not this suppose a constant and growing

* A feeling far deeper than any other object can excite.

addition to the number of those beings? Shall we attempt to remove this (apparent at least) difficulty by supposing, with Pythagoras, the transmigration of souls from one state to another? All will then revolve in a circle, but does not this limit the action of infinite power, in excluding new creations? On the other hand, it cannot outgrow itself, but does it not itself increase (being, too, before infinite) by this increase of action? Alas, am I to consider the perplexity which this leaves the mind under, as a punishment for its allowing itself to ramble where it "finds no end, in wandering mazes lost?" But if, as Pope says, we are to "wait the great teacher Death," we must be sensible, in some degree at least, of what we are to wait for. The patience and resignation required for this, is one great trial that we have to undergo, which must be done in bearing and repressing the disquietudes into which the mind is apt to fall. To counteract these, opposite feelings are given to, and encouraged in us.*

DCCCXXXIII.

THE longer we live, the more we feel the value of what is implied in the word *comfortable*, probably from our alternate want and enjoyment of it. It is a sort of substitute for *ease*, of which it has been said, that it is a big word, though spelt only with four letters. These are homely phrases, but are they the less expressive of our natural feelings? They may be considered as themes for philosophy to descant upon. But what can be said of them with greater truth than that they are aspirations after a

* By the resources to which we may apply.

“peace which the world cannot give,” and that we can only find some consolations to supply the place of. The very desire however of obtaining happiness, gives encouragement to the hope of it, if not here, at least hereafter.

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DCCCXXXIV.

How pleasing is the view of domestic felicity, whether it is exemplified in the mild but intelligent simplicity, the blunter honesty, the calm resignation, or the more animated vivacity, tempered with all the charities and religious feelings, of him or her who holds

—— “ the mild majesty of private life, .
Where peace with ever blooming olive crowns
The gate,” &c.

Such scenes carry the view forward to that “mercy” which is promised to the “thousands who love God, and keep his commandments :” and to that consummation of it, which will be in heaven.

—o—

DCCCXXXV.

IN reasoning upon abstruse subjects, our opinion must be determined more by a comparison of the weight of the arguments on one side or the other, than by considering those on one side as answers to those on the other ; because they cannot* be applied with suffi-

* At least not always.

cient closeness to become so : and it results from thence, that absolute conviction, by either proof or refutation, cannot take place on either side. More perhaps may be said in favour of one opinion than the other ; but still that more cannot be considered as an answer to the less ; they are, to a certain degree at least, independent of, and unconnected with each other. Hudibras says, “ A man convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still.” This certainly is a witty and shrewd description of obstinacy, and as the French aptly call it, *opiniâtreté* : but after all, is he really convinced ? or of what can we expect him to be convinced ? of the error of his own opinion, or of its inferiority to ours ? and on what will this conviction depend ? Instead of a “ man convinced,” &c. should it not be, a man who ought to be convinced ?

DCCCXXXVI.

WHAT we are not competent to judge of, we can but imperfectly assent to ; in respect therefore, of the mysteries of Religion, the utmost that a thinking man can say, is, “ Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief !” Less than this however he will not say, if he makes the proper use of his intellectual powers, and has a proper sense of their very limited extent.

The man who refuses his assent to the mysterious doctrines of the Scriptures, takes a far greater weight of responsibility upon himself than he would give up of his right to judge for himself, if he believed them ; and of what is he entitled to judge, but of the evidence by which they are attested ?

DCCCXXXVII.

PERHAPS one objection to the apparently exclusive doctrine of Faith, as it is insisted upon by the Methodists, arises from the separation that we consider as being made by it, of faith and good works; but if the latter is regarded as the necessary result of the former (for the same dispositions under the proper regulation of reason, will lead to both) will not that objection be done away? Perhaps an objection will still remain from the possibility that the nature of faith may be misunderstood, but may not this be obviated by a reference to the moral precepts of Scripture, clearly as they are enjoined, and indispensable as the observance of them is made by our Saviour? What doctrine or precept, either abstruse or not, may not be misunderstood or perverted, by a partial interpretation, and without the proper application of it? The plain parts of Scripture are those which immediately regard our moral duties; but our attention to these is to be founded in faith. There is indeed a disposition in the mind that induces it to limit its reception to the truths of natural religion, that is, of Deism; besides the power which it possesses, of inductive reasoning, which may strengthen that belief: but if the belief of Christianity, and of its most abstruse doctrines, may also be acquired by a process which reason will approve of, may it not be considered as equally indispensable to those who are situated and qualified to go through that process? Those who are not, may well be satisfied with the appeal it makes to their moral sense, and their affections; these surely must dispose us to a

belief in, or at least a reverence for Christianity; the modes of that reception may differ, but any excuse that may be made for that, does not remove the obligation to examine, and to receive it, quantum et quomodo in nobis est. Motives to the fulfilment of moral obligations, must certainly be founded on some higher principle than any that this world can afford; Religion is the highest of all, and the reception of it must include that of all the truths which it contains. The progress or the affections certainly leads us to a belief in Christianity: for there is nothing that can interest them so strongly as that does; it is there that the hand of misfortune throws us, as the only reliance that can support us under its pressure; no system of Religion or of Philosophy can do it equally with that: those who have not known it, cannot make the comparison: and shall we say that this arises merely from the constitution of human nature? From whence comes that constitution? From him who has allotted those different means of satisfaction and support to the different situations in life in which his creatures are placed.

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DCCCXXXVIII.

WE are, generally speaking, satisfied with the passing enjoyments of life, without taking all the means that the right use of our reason would suggest, to increase and make the most of them: this indeed is not to be done by following the mere impulse of the moment; nor yet those courses into which our habits sometimes lead us.



DCCCXXXIX.

THERE are many employments that require only a certain degree of intellect, and that seem to keep the mind down to their own level: some minds however rise above it.



DCCCXL.

IN which does the mind feel the greatest elevation; in viewing the highest mountains that the earth contains, or the interminable horizon that the level plain of the sea presents to us? Equal in both; for when we look towards Heaven, He is present there; when to the, extremest bounds of the earth, He is there also:



DCCCXLI.

WHEN we attempt to supply the defects of our reason by an immediate reference to the Power that is above it, we must be puzzled by our incapacity to discover in what mode the assistance and communication can be conveyed to us; and by our constant inability to ascertain the fact itself; the want of these (if we persist in making that reference) we supply by enthusiasm or fanaticism.

The only conclusion that our reason will justify our forming, is the general one, that "every good gift cometh from above." But this faith, like all others, must have "a reason given for it:" which it certainly admits of, and has had.

DCCCXLII.

THE consciousness of our own unworthiness, and the hopes of pardon and acceptance, are, the one so deeply rooted, the other so elevated, that they require an adequate pledge to assure us of their being reconciled to, and made compatible with each other; no idea that we can form of God and his attributes can give us this assurance; if we consider his power and majesty, we cannot conceive how he can condescend to notice such miserable creatures as we are; (such was the idea of Frederick of Prussia;) if we consider his purity, we cannot conceive how he can tolerate or pardon human depravities. No abstract idea that we can form of him, in short, can encourage us to hope or to expect any thing from him, much less when we consider ourselves: it is only his word and his promises, and our trust in them, that can give us that assurance, and inspire us with those hopes of happiness in another world, which are so necessary to encourage us in our passage through this. We are indeed too much agitated and distracted by contending principles and feelings here, to entertain one steady and unvarying hope of happiness hereafter; it is only prayer and religious meditation that can bring the feelings to one fixed point, and disperse all the worldly and tumultuous thoughts that make the "needle tremble" on each side of the pole, to which it ought to, and would fain fix itself.

DCCCXLIII.

ONE great object of our endeavours should be, to know the limits of our mental powers, to know why they are so

limited, and why certain things are hidden from us : this we may do, and this knowledge is perhaps the highest, and certainly is the most useful and satisfactory that we can attain. It will teach us the value of those communications, which supply any defect they may have in informing our reason, by the impression they are calculated and ought to make, upon our feelings.



DCCCXLIV.

MAY we not say, that the hope of mercy justifies the expectation of it? For hope implies desire, which is a step towards attainment, as, “the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom,” &c.



DCCCXLV.

THE varying state of our spirits may (as I have said before) be an obstruction to the knowledge of ourselves, from the too great satisfaction or dissatisfaction that their elevation or depression may produce; this may (to a certain degree at least) make us physically incapable of self-knowledge; the indulgence of ill habits, and the want of thought, will make us morally so; Is then all exhortation to self-knowledge useless? Not so: it is, like all moral or religious exhortation, an incitement and encouragement to those who are inclined to self-examination; it is a sort of “ductor dubitantium;” and it makes us “watch” as well as “pray.”



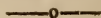
DCCCXLVI.

In our intercourse with our fellow-creatures, we may seek for approbation, but we must often (generally perhaps) be content with mere sufferance; still, however, "the spirit of a man sustaineth his infirmity;" that is, when the spirit is itself sustained, and not "wounded" by consciousness.



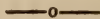
DCCCXLVII.

MAN's life is, generally speaking, rather a flight from unhappiness, than a pursuit of happiness: for, in one shape or other, "premit atra comes sequiturque fugacem." But in this, is not equal justice done to all mankind? And are not the compensations alike equally given? There is a "murus aheneus" to which all may resort.



DCCCXLVIII.

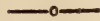
SENTENTIOUS compositions exhibit little more than the power of expressing in words (the embodiment of thought) what all are capable of feeling: at least, who have any thought or feeling at all, and these have an extent, which all expression must fall short of.



DCCCXLIX.

SENECA's "stet quicunque volet potens, &c." gives, I think, but a fallacious statement of the effects which the

opposite courses of life that he describes, are likely to produce: for the stare potens "*aulæ culmine lubrico*," is not more likely to make a man "*notus nimis omnibus*," than the "*obscurus moriar senex*," is unlikely to make him "*notus sibi*:" which he cannot well be, without that trial, which an intercourse (reasonably limited) with his fellow-creatures is necessary to produce.



DCCCL:

A MAN who has contracted a habit (to him become a second nature) of living constantly in the world, is not satisfied with having it before him, but he must be in the very throng of it, where, "*Oblitus sui*," he is only occupied with those about him, whom he cannot, even in his moments of retirement, lose sight of, to turn his eyes inwards upon himself; nay, he is even liable to lose the power of observing others, either by their faults (often their most conspicuous part) being too much magnified by nearness of vision, or else by the confusion which their mixture will create in his mind, though this may partly depend on the constitution of it, and perhaps on the atmosphere which he sees through. He loses even himself in the contemplation of others, and his air, manner, and speech will be affected by his intercourse with them, for he cannot but "*smell*" of the great "*shop*" in which he lives, with some little variation perhaps in the odour of its contents." "*Ne quid nimis*" is not his motto, and in the exclusiveness of his pursuits (if indeed he can have any in the great turmoil which envelopes him) he becomes incapable of attending to any objects but those which his eyes, ears, and all his senses are buried in.

DCCCLI.

NATURE, in the vastness of her field, is continually varied to our eyes; men, imitative creatures as they are, are comparatively uniform, at least in their outward appearance; for the shilling must become smooth by constant friction.

DCCCLII.

THERE is a part of the world of which it is hard to say whether they are more satisfied with having something to praise, or something to blame; and indeed take the world throughout, it will not be easy to determine on which side the preponderance lies. Perhaps it may be resolved into Horace's

“Quo nos cunque rapit tempestas.”

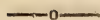
or it may be

“Arbitrio popularis auræ.”

for there is a fashion in opinion, as in dress; and in one sense

“All the world's a turncoat.”

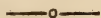
Happily however most men are too much occupied with their own concerns to attend much to those of others, unless when they are in concurrence or competition with them; and it is still happier, that there is one day in the week, when their attention is directed to better objects. Sunday then is, at any rate, something more than a mere rest from labour.



DCCCLIII.

WHAT does the prospect of society exhibit to a mind disposed to indulge in gloomy forebodings?^{*} Gradual deterioration, till it ends in the extreme of depravity.

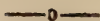
“Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.”



DCCCLIV.

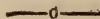
THE increased intercourse of society, and the ever-changing events which that, and more important and extended causes have given, and may give rise to, seem, in part at least, to have produced the novels which the press has lately teemed with. They have become the vehicles of information and instruction, as well as of amusement. But does not this tend to throw a fabulous air over every thing, even the most serious? Does it not at least threaten to change history into romance? Perhaps not; for the passing events of our own times, will always have a superior interest to call our attention to, and will induce us to compare them with those that are past, and to look forward from them to those that are to come; neither of which can be done without an adherence to truth.

* So we see that even Horace had his. I think the ancients must have had some term that corresponded to our “blue devils.”



DCCCLV.

THERE is such a mixture of virtue and vice, innocence and crime, wisdom and folly, in this world, that any representation of its passing scenes must be mixed as they are in real life: it is only in the next world that they can be separated and weighed, and the final judgment given.



DCCCLVI.

YOUNG, in one of his letters to Richardson, calls death a passage to the "country of imagination." This at first startles; but it by no means represents that country as merely imaginary; it is not the less real, for being known to us through our imaginations, which the very denunciations of it, high as is the authority from which they proceed, can only refer us to for the conception (which indeed, they say we cannot form) and perhaps even the belief of it: (at least they can only appeal to our "hopes and fears.") This surely gives a higher importance to what we call imagination, and enforces our attention, with the aid of our reason, to the indulgence and the regulation of it. When it is said that neither hath "the eye seen, nor the ear heard, nor can the heart conceive," &c. the imagination is still left to expatiate in a field, the view of which is so awfully, and at the same time so invitingly opened to it.

DCCCLVII.

Does not the fear of misrepresentation sometimes deter us from fair and just representation? At this rate we make a compromise between truth and falsehood, wisdom and folly, and do we not lose sight of the maxim “*veritas magna est, et prævalebit?*”

DCCCLVIII.

WHAT extent is to be given to the maxim, “Honesty is the best policy?” or what are to be its limits?*

DCCCLIX.

If an unlimited extent is to be given to the “*Humanum est errare,*” it should seem that a combat of opinions is only a combat of errors; but surely some truths are within our reach, those at least, which it imports us most to know: and how is that knowledge to be obtained but by discussion? They have been discussed, and the truth ascertained. Then let us arm ourselves for the field with the armour which has already been prepared for us.

We must not shelter our errors under a false pretext of our weakness, any more than entertain a vain conceit of our strength. I am (I think) aware that what I am writing is capable of being perverted, but is it not also capable of being “righted,” (to use a naval term) and its truth (if it is so founded) vindicated?

“*Si quid novisti rectius istis,*” &c.

* None but those that bound practicability.

DCCCLX.

NINON de l'Enclos professed an aversion to quotations; perhaps it was because she did not like to have things placed in a different point of view from what she chose to view them in. She might indeed have quoted opinions opposite to her own. But could she do that consistently with her own conscience, even of her observances, or with those of the age in which she lived? She might probably wish to throw a veil over both.*

DCCCLXI.

THE "Humanum est errare" must not be our guide, as well as its own excuse.

DCCCLXII.

IN all countries perhaps, more virtue, and consequently more real happiness, will be found in some classes of society

* Some one said before Ninon, "Monsieur N. a de l'Esprit, mais il n'a pas lu beaucoup."—"Tant mieux (disoit elle) il ne citera pas donc." Perhaps the simple cause of her hating quotations was, that she had a strong head, and but little erudition. My reader will know the compliment paid her by St. Evremont.

L'indulgente et sage Nature
A fait l'ame de Ninon,
De la volupté d'Epicure,
Et de la vertu de Caton.

A pretty union, of Epicureism and Stoicism; still more of Sensuality and Virtue; extremes indeed will meet sometimes; but from whence do they set out?

than in others, and the superiority in this respect, has been generally attributed to the middle class: but the means of deserving and acquiring happiness must be common to all the different classes, and, in part at least, possessed and exercised by them all; were it not so, the infectious want of it in any one class would soon communicate itself to the rest, and the whole mass would become corrupted.



DCCCLXIII.

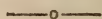
IT is in the faculty of reasoning more extensively and comprehensively, of combining, and comparing, of drawing consequences, of discerning connections and analogies that are more or less distant or immediate, that man is superior to the brute creation, which indeed appear to be capable of forming simple propositions, of which perhaps we can say no more, than that their capacities are proportioned to their wants, and in a manner that we cannot judge of by any comparison with our own. From the contemplation of ours, indeed we can look up higher, and form some conception, at least, of superior intelligence. Surely these faculties admit of increase and development.



DCCCLXIV.

THE mysterious parts of the Bible may leave the mind in a state of suspense, expressed by "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief;" but surely, the intelligible parts, connected as they are with the rest, and ad-

dressed both to our reason and our feelings, must leave us without a right, and a well-disposed mind without the power of unbelief.



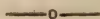
DCCCLXV.

“ DESPAIRING beside a clear stream
A Shepherd forsaken was laid,
And whilst a false nymph was his theme,
A willow supported his head.”

When all at once, roused by a sudden impulse, he started up, seized a stone, (no matter whether big or little) that lay near him, and looking up to the skies, cried with a doleful voice,

“ Flectere si nequeo superos”—

Then casting his eyes downwards on the stream, that sluggishly flowed between its dark and hollow banks (as Virgil no doubt supposed the infernal river to do) he added in a firmer tone “ acheronta movebo,” and raising his arm, plunged the stone into its bosom. He moved it, indeed, but 'twas only for a moment — the stone sank to the bottom, the waters closed over it, and mocking his hopes, continued to flow on in the same sullen silence as before. Alas, poor shepherd !



DCCCLXVI.

THE passions have one advantage (if it is one) over reason : they go strait forward to their object, while

reason is continually erring in the pursuit of her's : this is at once an exception to, and an illustration of, the "humanum est errare." Is it because the "objects" of the one are "nigh," and those of the other "at distance and in prospect?" Ah weak and short-sighted Reason, how dost thou halt behind the "strength" of the passions !



DCCCLXVII.

How often do we hide our selfish vanity under the cloak of social or of public sympathy, or public spirit, betraying it, at the same time, by a neglect of those duties which our nearer connection with others imposes upon us.

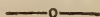


DCCCLXVIII.

THOSE who cannot love others can have no idea of being loved by them ; for love, to be enjoyed, must be reciprocal. Mere self-love can give no real happiness unless it is mixed with social. Vanity cannot feed on itself, without preying on itself. If we do not love others, we shall suspect them of hating us (which* indeed is sometimes concealed under the pretence of indifference) unless we adopt the mortifying alternative of being the objects of their pity or contempt, which the secret sense of our deserving it will disable us from returning. No

* Which suspicion.

resource then remains to set our minds at ease but divesting ourselves of all feeling, which is impossible. The very attempt to do it indicates it : we do but shake our chains, without throwing them off.



DCCCLXIX.

WE cannot be too open to others, if we are sure of their sympathy : if our case deserves it, their withholding it will but revert upon them. Openness itself indeed establishes some claim to sympathy, though we cannot always depend upon its being acknowledged by others ; but, generally speaking, if we tell the truth to ourselves, we need not be afraid of telling it to them ; and if they do not know it, they will suspect it, and 'tis ten to one that our consciousness will betray us. " Noscitur a sociis" may be understood in two senses ; and if we withdraw ourselves from the society of the world, we cannot entirely escape its observation.



DCCCLXX.

A GOOD part of the merit of a writer of such a desultory work as this, is in interpreting (or anticipating) the feelings of his readers ; and where can be the merit of a book, if it neither exhibits nor elicits thought ? 'Tis true, we may *laugh* without it.*

* Parce, Lector benevole.

DCCCLXXI.

A CRITICAL friend of mine called the printing words in Italics, a bad compliment paid both to the readers and the Author's self; but we should lay a stress upon those words in speaking, why not then in publishing them?—Leave it for our readers to do—so they may—but the *initiative* does not come from them.*

DCCCLXXII.

THE inconsistencies of others, if they are not carried to a mischievous extent, make more than half the amusement of Society. The contributions to them are general, for who is not a subscriber? Accept of my mite, reader.—Your *mite*? No, no, your “wallet” is full.

DCCCLXXIII.

“HUMANUM est errare” will shew itself in all the judgments that we can form of men or things: “decipimur specie” is applicable to our maturest and best weighed opinions, nay, even our own consciences may deceive us: the intimate knowledge which must ensure an unerring judgment, belongs to God alone.

* But from the Author.

DCCCLXXIV.

WHEN we hear remonstrances from the pulpit against the neglect or violation of religious duties, and when we see congregations listening to them with apparent seriousness and attention, and when, on leaving the Church, we see the same persons with many others, walking along the streets and highways in decent silence and quiet, and apparently equally occupied with the sacred business of the day, we feel at a loss to conceive to whom the remonstrances we so lately heard were addressed. But we have been viewing mankind at a moment the most favorable to, and most stimulative of, their best dispositions.

DCCCLXXV.

I HAVE said before, that publishing one's thoughts to the world, is holding a sort of conversation with it; it should indeed be the result of previous "communing with ourselves," perhaps more than it has been with me: and I may add, that "*litera scripta manet*;" but politeness does not forbid the reader to take up the book again, if he is disposed to reconsider any of its contents, though it does to desire a Man to repeat the words he has just uttered. The "*vox audita perit*" I am afraid is too much exemplified even in our attention to a sermon, though habitual attention will overcome this: but there must be something to *build upon*; a disposition to receive the "seed that is sown;" if there is not, nothing but weeds will be produced.



DCCCLXXVI.

THERE are two ways of encouraging ourselves in improper indulgences, one by making advantageous comparisons of ourselves with others, as the pharisee did with the publican, the other by sheltering ourselves under their example. There is indeed a third way, which is by following our own impulses, without reflecting upon them at all. In this however we want no encouragement.



DCCCLXXVII.

WE can only be made sensible of our ignorance by considering things that are beyond the reach of our knowledge ; perhaps our unwillingness to consider them, may arise in part from our fear of undergoing the mortifying conviction of our ignorance.



DCCCLXXVIII.

THE sense, the conviction, the acknowledgment of our ignorance, is the best, and perhaps the only preservative from making presumptuous, nay, erroneous conclusions ; for I cannot see how conclusions unsuggested, unau-

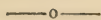
thorized by knowledge, can be otherwise than erroneous and false.* conclusions must be founded on a train of reasoning; what train of reasoning can be followed where there is no knowledge to guide us? If we do not arrive at truth, we must lose ourselves in falsehood: there may indeed be a mixture of both; but however mixt, they must be distinct and separable from each other, and the bringing them together is itself an error, and a deviation from truth.



DCCCLXXIX.

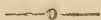
To convince ourselves how much all things are connected, at least by their assemblage in the vast storehouse of the brain, we need only follow one train of thought, and observe how many others it will be generative of, and what an almost infinite number of ramifications it will spread out into: this indeed may arise more from the circumstances of time and place, than from the nature of the things themselves, so that a memory so constituted may be what the French wittily (and punningly) call a "*Memoire d' Aubergiste*;" still however they must be connected, no matter by what, to suggest one another, and that connection will be more apparent if they all contribute to form one general conclusion, whether it immediately regards the first object of our contemplation, or not.

* Except they have the luck to be true:



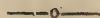
DCCCLXXX.

As a dog decays and dies, so does a man ; “he perishes like the beast of the field.”—Yes, says a soul-denying materialist, the progress here is the same, and so will the conclusion be.—But does the dog think, reflect, and look forward? surely not; your analogy then ceases, and your own argument is turned against you; the body, and animal spirits share the same fate in both, but the mind preserves its independence, and only changes the object of its regard; from whence are the expectations which it forms, and from whence has the assurance been given that they will be realized?



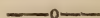
DCCCLXXXI.

THE more of purity that a religion requires, the stronger is the proof of its sanctity and truth. Is not this applicable to the Reformed, in comparison with the Roman Catholic Church? Does not the latter afford many refuges from the stings of conscience, and the terrors of punishment, not in divine mercy, but in human indulgencies and absolutions? These are grounded on the former it is true; but with what adherence to the conditions it requires?



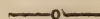
DCCCLXXXII.

THE absolution of the Roman Catholic Church is a power assumed ; that of our liturgies is the declaration of a power possessed and exercised elsewhere : what more is it than the interpretation of the scriptural text ? May not the right to interpret them be vested in the minister ? How else can his ministry be exercised ?



DCCCLXXXIII.

THE refinements of polished life are agreeable, and even important, when they do not descend to frivolities ; to these they cannot attach any real value.



DCCCLXXXIV.

THE best novels that have been published may perhaps be compared to the Tom Hickathrifts, Jack the Giant-killers, &c. of our childhood, with this difference, that they are written with more thought and ingenuity, and so are better adapted to us grown children. The gilded sugar plum may be mixed with salutary ingredients.



DCCCLXXXV.

“ No peace nor ease that heart can know,

“ Which, like the needle true,

“ Turns at the touch of joy or woe,

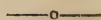
“ But turning, trembles to.”

True, Mrs. Greville ; but without this alternation, that peace and ease would be but apathy : and the sense of joy is doubled by the recollection of past woes, while that of woe is consoled by the hope of joy and peace, perhaps to come in this world, from Him who alone can give it ; but if not, certainly in the next, as promised by him to us, if we do not forfeit it.



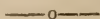
DCCCLXXXVI.

THE satisfaction that we cannot find in human pursuits, and the best consolation for the disappointments they expose us to, we must seek in the conviction that they are of no real consequence. This is Horace's “ Nil admirari,” and Solomon's “ vanitas vanitatum.” We are shadows, and all we pursue on this side of the grave is nothing more. But it is not in vain that we are impelled to look forward ; we may grasp at shadows here, but the *substance* is else-where ; and it is only for a while out of our reach,



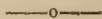
DCCCLXXXVII.

WE are apt sometimes to speak of a thing that we feel we ought to do, as being what we actually do. This may prevent our knowledge of the real state of our minds, which perhaps we are unwilling to acknowledge, even to ourselves,



DCCCLXXXVIII.

So powerful are our passions, and so dangerous their impulses, that we cannot safely give way to the indignation that the greatest crimes may excite in us. How strongly does this evince the truth of "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."



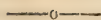
DCCCLXXXIX.

BEFORE we give way to the indignation that any injustice we think done to us may raise in our minds, we should make ourselves thoroughly sure that we have not deserved it.



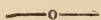
DCCCXC.

IT is in the correction of ourselves that the "Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum," deserves most to be attended to and followed.



DCCCXCI.

THE effect of a thing said depends much on the manner in which it is said; more may be effected by a gentle touch (or rather titillation) than by a rough application; and thus a new sense may be given to "*suaviter* (or perhaps *jocositer*) in modo, fortiter in re."



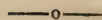
DCCCXCII.

THERE are some things that will not admit of being treated with gentleness: when a man has committed a serious crime unpardonable here on earth, (and all crimes are in nature, even those that are against it,) he must hide his head from every one but himself, and that he cannot do: he has shut up every avenue to real enjoyment; he has "murdered peace," as surely as Macbeth did; a terrible phantom will continually intrude upon his imagination, and

"expellat furca tamen, usque recurret."

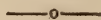
Perhaps his only bar to suicide will be in the more than feminine timidity* which his crime has brought along with it; he must not however forget that though the eye of man is shut against him, that of God is not; and that he has still the means of "finding favour in His sight."

* This would be ill-exchanged for a desperate hardness; nor would that be courage, which will best be shewn in bearing the consequence of, and



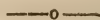
DCCCXCIII.

ONE great help to candor is, not to consider every opinion declared, every wish or feeling expressed, as a mark of the constant and habitual disposition of the mind; the feeling of one moment may be corrected and replaced by a better in the next.



DCCCXCIV.

EVERY man has a right to give his opinion, and no man has a right to dictate to others; if the first was not done, there could be no discussion; if the second was done all discussion would be precluded, or something worse would be substituted in its stead.



DCCCXCVI.

How partial, how fallible, how presumptuous, and consequently how unjust are human judgments; "who art thou that judgest another's servant?" may well be addressed to all mankind.

atoning for the crime that has been committed; the greatest courage is the exercise of patience. By plunging into eternity we shall only end the misery of this world, in falling into infinitely greater in the next; let the criminal hold his hand then, and try what repentance will do.

DCCCXCVII.

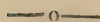
TILL Truth is fully displayed, there will always be room for humbugs.

DCCCXCVIII.

ALL that we can learn from the writings of others, will be of little use to us, if we do not reflect upon, and sometimes add to it ourselves. Those who think for themselves, will require no more to be said, than will give them a subject to think upon, a basis for a superstructure of their own; those who do not, will ask, why has no more been said?

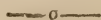
DCCCXCIX.

IT is very difficult, if at all possible, to lay down a general maxim that is not liable to at least a partial censure; therefore all such should be received, if worthy of reception, with some qualifications, which perhaps the Author had not time to make, or if he had, the length of his maxim might have tired his reader, whose judgment is appealed to for its reception or rejection.



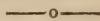
DCCCC.

IF there was not another world, Spinosas system would be the only true one; but can there be a stronger proof* (independent of Revelation) that there is?



DCCCCI.

THE promises of the Gospel, if true, are worth all the pains that can be taken, to understand and to put our confidence in them; they accordingly may be expected to require some of this pains-taking, and they require no more than they deserve and will repay, for we shall find, that the more attention we bestow upon them, the more our confidence in them will be increased, and in the same proportion will our affections be prepared to receive the communications that have been given to us. Nothing more is required of us for the accomplishment of this purpose, than what our reason and our feelings, under proper regulation, will perfectly accord in, and what is equally accordant with all that we find in the Scriptures.



DCCCCII.

IN an impressive discourse, the arguments used should

* Stronger than this alternative.

be unanswerable,* and the questions put, such as will admit only of an answer in the affirmative; and such will the doctrines of Christianity amply afford.

—o—

DCCCCIII.

THE exertion of all human abilities is useful, even of those that are directed to improper objects, or are even designedly malevolent;† for they excite (as evil produces good) the efforts of the better disposed, to counteract them. If this is true, how much more it behoves us to be candid to those who are mistaken in their objects, or in the means they take to pursue them; and what lenity ought we not to shew to the passions that may have led them into error. Peccare et errare, so considered, are almost synonymous terms.

—o—

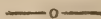
DCCCCIV.

IN a state like ours, made up as it is of pleasures and pains, of sufferings and consolations, the enquiry where happiness is to be found, seems almost an idle one; our sufferings and enjoyments are continually counteracting each other; and the only question is, on which side the preponderance lies; all the ideas we can form of divine justice and benevolence, neces-

* By any arguments that can reasonably be offered.

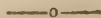
† Useful, but not in obtaining credit or satisfaction to ourselves.

sitate us to believe that it is on that of good. "If to all men happiness is meant," it must be on certain conditions; but it does not consist so much in actual enjoyment, as in the hope of future; and the prospect of that must be encouraged by the retrospect of our past lives, and the consciousness of our present desire and endeavours to fulfil our duties.



DCCCCV.

THOSE who think are worth writing for, but not those who do not think; unless it is to make them think. Are thoughts so applied a stimulus or a touchstone? "Fungar vice cotis," says Horace. May I?



DCCCCVI.

"THERE is nothing new under the sun," which lends its light to give the lustre of novelty to what is old.

Repetition may be censured, but it is the repetition of phrases, not of thought, for the best* that can suggest themselves deserve most to be repeated; as the best and most frequent impressions are made from the finest engravings.

"Is this a beaten track? ne'er beat enough,
Till enough learnt the truths it would inspire."

* Thoughts.

Reader, have not your feelings been most strongly excited, when awakened into the recollection of what formerly interested them ?

DCCCCVII.

OUR thoughts are like a lazy horse ; they require a spur.

DCCCCVIII.

MERE memory recalls ideas ; judgment, or if you will, imagination, arranges and associates them.

DCCCCIX.

IMAGINATION is the best exciter, Reason the best calculator ; what the first throws in, the second weighs and appreciates.

DCCCCX.

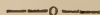
THE brackets of a parenthesis are a break in a sentence, commas a pause, and both are used to introduce a collateral thought, of which *Italics* are an enforcement.*

* See No DCCCLXXI.



DCCCCXI.

FEELING is the strongest excitement of the mind ; as Waller felt, when he wrote, "Peace Chloris, peace, or singing die," &c.



DCCCCXII.

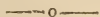
It seems as if people cannot enjoy what is beautiful in itself, without connecting it with something that degrades it ; such is the giving the name of Waltzes to the beautiful airs of Beethoven,* &c. Is this from a prevalent depravity of morals ? No, it is the light, capricious, and it is to be hoped, short-lived fashion of the day, that has thus polluted our best feelings and most refined enjoyments ; but this profanation of Nature's choicest gifts cannot last.

* Still worse than this, the gross simplicity of the Swiss is exchanged for the — I will not say delicacy, of more polished nations, which have not that simplicity to plead as an excuse. The Waltz however I find has undergone some curtailments.



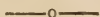
DCCCXIII.

SATIRE cannot be too strong, when it has a proper object; but the object ceases to be so, when satirized beyond its deserts; as the Duke of Chandos was by Pope. Such satire defeats its own end, and is only fit to gratify ill nature; it has not even the merit of a caricature, to soften that into a laugh.



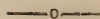
DCCCCXIV.

How strongly must every one who knows how his talent ought to be used, partake of St. Paul's anxiety, "lest he himself should be a cast-away!"



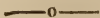
DCCCCXV.

LET our houses and places be as magnificent and beautiful as they may, much the greatest part of the enjoyment of them, will be comprised in the word *home*. This is indeed a striking instance of the justice and benevolence of Providence, and no less so in thus giving us a kind of foretaste and preparation, for that longer home to which we must all come at last, and which we thus unconsciously look forward to almost from our very nursery.



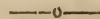
DCCCCXVI.

As much comfort is enjoyed in having satisfied the appetite, as in satisfying it; but if we do more than satisfy it all comfort is at an end. This is as much a moral, as a physical truth. May not most of us say, "Experto crede."



DCCCCXVII.

THE more we enjoy present comforts, whether real or fancied, the less are we inclined to anticipate future disappointments; nor would it be a friendly office in others to prepare us for them.



DCCCCXVIII.

As all judgments must be formed from comparisons, all errors in judgment must arise from making false ones. Those who do not feel an interest in tracing errors to their source, will either not understand this, or will disregard it; but Oh, what do we gain by this knowledge of our weakness? yes, we gain the knowledge of truth; we gain what may mortify, but will console us—will lower those pretensions that can give no real happiness.

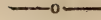
DCCCCXIX.

FROM what men are in some instances, we may guess pretty nearly what they will be in others; their characteristics being the same, as causes, they will produce the same effects, and the more as we act in imitation of one another. However monotonous this may be, it is one of the great securities of life, as we know by it what we are to expect; and there is still variety and novelty enough left both to amuse and instruct. Extraordinary occasions, which we have no good reason to wish for, though rash and presumptuous* spirits may, must be met by extraordinary minds, and it is there that the different degrees of ability, under the guiding hand of Providence, shew themselves. Patience, perseverance, and resignation, are the supports and stays of life, and even in death we have a reliance and example given us, in Him who suffered death, that we may rise again.

DCCCCXX.

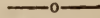
IT has not entered into the head of man to conceive the joys of heaven, but it surely has entered into his heart to wish for them, and the only idea we can form of them, is in the sense we feel of our own capacities and desires. This too is "a beaten track."

* Or at least ardent.



DCCCCXXI.

As there are debasements, so there are exaltations in the human character; nor would these opposites have been put into action, if their results were not opposite also; but no—without the sole great act of atonement, how small would have been the difference between these results! How would the “wheat and the chaff” have been confounded, which He who made that atonement, He whose “fan is in his hand,” alone can separate.



DCCCCXXII.

THE different courses of life, like rivers, all end in the great ocean of eternity, into which they flow. It is not the mere difference of their courses (for what “part” in life may not be “acted well?”) that determines their situation in that ocean, various as may be the ingredients of which the great mass of its waters is composed; small we may hope is the portion which will not admit of being purified.



DCCCCXXIII.

“THE few who are above jealousy, and the many who are below it.”—“*Gaities and Gravities*,” vol. i. page 129,

ACCORDING to this, and the classification in these pages, the preference generally given to the middle class of society, appears to be a mistaken one; but I believe that these classifications are all so, and the distinction between the characters of individuals, is in great measure independent of them; were it not so indeed, there would not be that just level preserved, which is observable throughout the moral world. Providence has exclusively attached no particular qualities to the middle, or any one class, but has left it to the free agency of individuals, under certain restrictions, to deserve as much of its favor, as what has been given to them enables them to do. While I am writing this, I cannot help feeling the sense of its benevolent spirit, and trusting that my modicum of talent and its exercise, may obtain for me that favor which no exertion of the longest life can be too much to earn; nor, I hope, do the superior gifts of others raise any jealousy or envy in me, that my better thoughts are not sufficient, with the grace of Providence, to quell.



DCCCCXXIV.

JULY 1, 1826. I have just been reading the description of the cemetery of Pere la Chaise, in the first volume of "Gaities and Gravities," and I cannot help thinking that its feeling and eloquent author would have done well to consider whether the display which he so well describes, impressive as it is, may not be a substitute for more serious, (I will not add more real) feelings, and more consonant

to the faith which has been given and enjoined to us, and with which our countrymen, or at least the great majority of them, may atone for the neglect they shew of the exhibitions which our continental neighbours so pompously display; several of the circumstances which the author himself relates, will I think make him sensible that the former, except in what relates to the shameful mischiefs (shameful even in school-boys) committed in Westminster Abbey, will not lose by the comparison. May I add, that the Author of this lively and very amusing (and no less interesting) work, will perhaps find that his second and more serious thoughts are at variance with *some* of the first ebullitions of his fancy and his feelings? It is not always the first impressions which objects give us, that we are to trust to, but other and more important ones with which they are associated.* The ingenious author will not be offended at this hint, given him by a real "Septuagenarian," who, alive as he is to the "gaieties," feels also the call which the "gravities" of these subjects have on his attention.

How apt are the finest displays of imagination to shew that they want the guidance of reason and reflection! If the equally ingenious author of *Gaieties and Gravities* will weigh these observations, he will find that they come from one who "loves truth more than he hates France," though he is by no means conscious of doing the latter. In going on with the perusal of his work, the reader must feel his

* Some observations, relative to this, may also be made upon the defence of "simulation," in the article "Pleasant illusions."

high raised expectation of continued amusement and interest: shall we call it an exertion of genius, or an almost spontaneous flow? will it in either case run itself out?



DCCCCXXV.

IN a strong mind there cannot be much sensibility, for strength and weakness are opposites, and cannot approach each other, without some diminution of one or the other. Sensibility, however amiable, must have its share of the latter, whatever degree there is of it in a strong mind, must be assumed or fancied. Some strong minds have been said to have possessed it, as Chancellor Thurlow's, &c. but in these either the strength or weakness must have been assumed, perhaps the former, for we can hardly suppose a human mind to be divested of all sensibility; in that case, it would not be strength, but hardness. In the Supreme Being himself we cannot suppose a want of sensibility, consistently with his mercy; but in him the Attributes temper each other in a manner that we can have no conception of; we can only judge of qualities as they mix themselves in our finite nature.

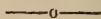


DCCCCXXVI.

POETRY, Painting, and Music,* are all divine; all,

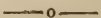
* Our best sculptors, particularly Mr. Chantrey, will not require me to add their art to the mention of the three to which it is so nearly allied,

the more deeply they are studied and felt, more forcibly raise our thoughts to the great fountain from whence they, and all the best gifts that have been bestowed on man, flow.



DCCCCXXVII.

How often may we find that the intensity of our feelings makes up for the defects of our ability to express them, in whatever mode we attempt it ! May not we reasonably hope, that those defects will be supplied in a future state—in the great consummation of all things ?



DCCCCXXVIII.

Is it by their bodies, their outward forms, that men are chiefly known ? No, surely, it is by their spirits, by the mind that directs their actions and conduct ; we consult, tis true, the characters of animals, particularly horses, but it is only as they are subservient to the uses of man ; and to whom is man himself subservient, but to his Creator, who certainly has made him “ a little lower than the angels.” And is this servant of God intended only to crawl for awhile upon the earth, or to lift up his head and strut about among his fellow reptiles ? No, surely, the very “ Os sublime,” which is given him, marks the high destiny which he looks up to, and to which his soul aspires ; all his hopes, all his fears

point to that immortality which he longs for, and for which any name that he may leave behind him is but a miserable substitute; for all the praise of men, during our lives, or after our deaths, is as nothing, in comparison with the favor of that Being who "made him in his own image," that, if we shew ourselves worthy of it, he may take us finally to Himself; if the contrary, that he may consign us to that state of punishment which must be final and eternal, after our trial on earth is over; or if that state too is a temporary one, that we may be prepared (for surely all trial must then be over) for a higher and better state after it. But this is the dream of popery,* or at least the substitute which our reason would vainly form, for the declaration made to us in the gospels, in which indeed different degrees of punishment are denounced against the evil-doers, but no mention is made of their being preparatory to any thing that is to follow. Purgatory! for what? To wash out the stains which we might have avoided the contamination of ourselves with (for why else was our free agency given to us?) in this our state of trial, and which therefore must be fixed upon us, as they have been by ourselves, with all their consequences, for ever. True, the mercy of God may, and doubtless will, wash out some of them, and be shewn in its lenity to the rest, but will only be so in consideration of the better marks by which we have atoned for them, in subordination to the great atonement which He himself has made through our blessed

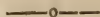
* Or rather an artifice, to increase its own power; for which purpose it thus throws out a temptation to sin; to commit venial sins, to which it assigns absolution or punishment.

Saviour, for what we could not free ourselves from here. Ask not why this has been done, for who can oppose the suggestions of his reason to the declarations of God himself? Ask only if these declarations have really been made by him, and see whether a fair examination of them does not tell thee that they have. Let us then strive to deserve the favor of God, by fulfilling the conditions on which it is promised to us.



DCCCCXXIX.

WHEN all the arguments that we can use, tend to one point, when our hopes and our fears unite in urging them to it, however short they may fall of it, that point must be the final one of our conclusions; either that or none; either they must mean that, or they must mean nothing; and it is not surely for this that we have the power of forming them given to us.



DCCCCXXX.

REASONING on serious subjects should be so managed, as to be intelligible to the lightest, and impressive on the deepest thinkers.



DCCCCXXI.

THE partial judgments that men form, are caused as well by their imperfect ability to judge of combined subjects, as by their eagerness to give way to their first impressions, which may be observed in men of the acutest minds, and greatest acquirements; and, what does no great credit to human judgment—the more in proportion to both these. “This also is vanity,”



DCCCCXXII.

To what I have already said of “Gaieties and Gravities,” I cannot help adding, that I think they shew the author’s imagination to be more impelled by his feelings than chastised by his judgment; but his imagination is so agreeably and inoffensively luxuriant, that I think we cannot wish it to be otherwise than it is. When I write this, however, I am only in his first volume; but the specimen it has given me of his feelings is my warrant; if his work disappoints me afterwards, I shall be tempted to throw it into the fire, or

“In vicum vendentem thus et odores.”



DCCCCXXIII.

WHAT feelings, or what expression of them, can exceed those of Cicero? Whoever united the politician

and philosopher like him? He stands like a Colossus (far superior to Cæsar) as it were in both worlds. I wish some able hand would draw a comparison between his writings and those of Seneca, and also of Plutarch; but what would not this embrace? A "Vita brevis" would hardly be sufficient for it.

DCCCCXXXIV.

As self-love is so predominant in us, it is not one of the least instances of the wisdom and goodness of Providence, that our social duties and our selfish feelings are so connected, that the fulfilment of the one is the highest gratification of the other.

DCCCCXXXV.

How little does the philosophy of Materialism (pure Materialism) regard feeling! or rather, how little is it consistent with itself!

DCCCCXXXVI.

How much may be said of a subject, if we take in the words in which it is expressed!—a further proof of the connection, if not identity, of words and things.



DCCCCXXXVII.

THE intellectual, as well as the material world, may be infinitely divisible ; if so, how can the mind of man exhaust its resources ?



DCCCCXXXVIII.

SPACE is measured by objects, time by events ; without these, time and space would be nothing ; but there must be other existences, or else all is a void, filled up by illusions ; from whence do these proceed ? From invisible beings, whose existence we cannot see into.



DCCCCXXXIX.

REASON is circumscribed, imagination is unbounded ; each therefore should be addressed accordingly. " Wit, whether wilt ? " should however be used as a rein, or as a call-back to a hound that over-runs his scent.



DCCCCXL.

IT is somewhat singular, that in addressing a person by his name, we should shew that we are more attentive

to the subject of our thoughts than to him ; that the first should be uppermost in our thoughts, and his name on our tongues ; this probably is to press it as home to him as it is to ourselves, I mean where no personality is intended.

DCCCCXLI.

IF we attend to the expression of opinions that are at variance with the scriptures, we shall generally find, that they are asserted without any reference to, or comparison with the latter ; a proof that the comparison is shrunk from.

DCCCCXLII.

THE pleasures of hunting, shooting, and fishing, are in the enjoyment of nature, *seasoned* with that of destroying her productions. To what shall we assign this ?*

DCCCXLIII.

TAUTOLOGY is sometimes justified by the enforcement it gives ; as in our prayer to be “ defended (doubly helpless as we then are,) from all the perils and dangers of this night,” &c.

* Perhaps to the mixed qualities of our nature.

DCCCCXLIV.

“Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem est.”

BUT the garrulous man need not be inquisitive to make him troublesome; it is enough that he is garrulous: his perseverance in talking (which makes him what the French call “a mill,”) the tone he speaks in, and the laugh of self-approbation which he generally accompanies it with, are equal interferences with the rights of others: he will neither give himself nor them time to think; and without that what can he say worth hearing? Those to whom he is talking may listen to him from complaisance, or from necessity, but they cannot do it with pleasure. But his garrulity may have still worse consequences; it must either proceed from and confirm his self-conceit, or from a wish to drive away reflection; perhaps he will say that he has no need of that, but he is mistaken, for his first thoughts are mere impulses, reflection can only come in the “second;” and either the proverb which says they are “best” is untrue, or else he may be dispensed from the observance of it, and who can lay claim to that?

There is however this difference between the above character and that of the proud, vain-glorious, and dogmatical man; the one may be susceptible of good humour and even of good feelings, which the other cannot be; in the one is a partial selfishness, the other is wholly absorbed in it; he makes all his intercourse with society, mixed as it perhaps is with servile adulation, merely subservient to his own selfish propensities; in the

one is a superficial vanity, in the other a deep rooted selfishness.



DCCCCXLV.

EVILS are so interwoven in our nature, and so productive of, and connected with each other in society, that perhaps it is not too much to say, that the eradication of no one can be effected without that of all the rest; if that were to take place, man would no longer be what he is, but would become what he can only be in another world, where alone “the just will be made perfect.”



DCCCCXLVI.

EVERY thing but God himself may (probably must) have had a beginning; evil particularly, as we are told that it will have an end, when this state of imperfection and trial shall end in the re-establishment of good and the consummation of all things, which can only be by that re-establishment. Evil exists in and for a time; when time is no more (as we are told, and as our reflections tell us it will be) evil will cease, and good alone will become permanent and everlasting; evil will exist only where it has its punishment, in that of those by whom it has come, and good will no longer be mixed and contaminated with it.



DCCCCXLVII.

IT cannot be denied, that the whiskers now worn have much more of a savage than a gentlemanly appearance; nor can I see why they should be thought necessary to give or increase the appearance of courage in our soldiers; unless we are to look for it in the chin or upper lip. A Christian or civilized soldier, should surely be distinguished from a Hun, a Mahometan, or a Tartar. The soldiers of a British sovereign should not resemble those of a Scandinavian, a Mahometan, or even a German, nor should courage wear the marks of ferocity: a soldier should not look upon his fellow-citizens with the same face that he looks at his enemies; such a confusion of distinctions might suit the satellites of a despot like Attila, but surely cannot become the soldiers of George the Fourth, and the defenders of their country.



DCCCCXLVIII.

WHO would expect sensuality in patriotism? But are there not many who make the occasion of a public dinner that of gratifying their own private appetites, reasonable indeed when under proper restraint, for we may eat and drink in a man's praise, aye, and give him "three times three" into the bargain, but "beastly" when "indulged their fulsome fill." This however in some is ennobled by being amalgamated with the exalted ambition of heading a mob, of stirring up all the passions that excite men to

resist lawful authority, and that tune their "most sweet voices" to the cries of "Confusion to—" "Down with—" &c. Oh! eloquence like courage is best displayed with a full stomach, and John Bull is in all his glory when he becomes the master of an infuriated herd. On such occasions as this (June 1826) when men may spend thousands and tens of thousands in exciting all the "passions" that drunkenness can "raise" not "quell"—to deeds of as glorious as seditious note, till

" At length with rage and wine oppress
" The vanquish'd victors"

sink under the tables which they have been wallowing upon.

Hail, all hail, ye candidates for counties, cities and boroughs, and ye peers who support them, who honor yourselves and your fellow-creatures by the performance and excitement of such exploits as these; brass, brass is the metal of which your statues should be composed, for bronze would not "shine" sufficiently to illustrate and equal such "deeds before men." Well may you sit down in self-applause, with your heads full and your pockets empty, after having performed them.*

* Perhaps however something may be said in defence of these constitutional breaches of morality, and they may more require to be moderated than totally extirpated.

—o—

DCCCCXLIX.

“VIDERE meliora et probare” is not sufficient to secure our integrity; what we see and approve of we must adhere to in practice; to do this, we must not indulge any habit that will lessen our title to the esteem of others; if we do, their confidence in us will be lessened in an equal proportion.

—o—

DCCCCL.

OF a book containing moral reflections, the first question to be asked is, are its statements true? The second, are they useful and important? These two points* gained, the work must be interesting; the rest, however recommendatory, is mere amusement.

—o—

DCCCCLI.

IF we approve of any thing improper in the conduct of others, we must either do it from ignorance of all the cir-

* Perspicuity indeed is another point which I fear may have been sometimes wanting in these “suggestions of the moment.”—*See the preface.*

cumstances of their case, or from our own want of a sense of propriety, and perhaps from an aptitude to mistake a display of vanity for that of right thinking and feeling.

—o—

DCCCCLII.

THE similar destructions of the mile-stones and monuments in this country, give us at least the consolation of knowing, that it is not so much the desire of destroying what is above us, and reducing it to our own barbarous level, that occasions this devastation, as the pure (pure? aye, the very essence of purity) love of mischief, whether in school-boys, or in full grown barbarians.

—o—

DCCCCLIII.

As in poetry every epigram should “like a jelly bag” be “pointed at its end,” so in prose, every sentence should end with a climax. This will give a sort of dramatic effect to compositions, and perhaps be an improvement upon Horace’s

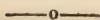
“*Servetur ad imum*

“*Qualis ab incepto processerit.*”*

* Perhaps the best way of securing this will be, by chusing a subject and style that will support its writer, who should not depend too much upon, nor over-rate his own powers,

———“*Ne*

“*Peccet ad extremum ridendus,*” &c.



DCCCCLIV.

Verses in a bower at St. Leonard's Hill :—

- “ These peaceful shades, this low-roof'd bower,
“ Great Maker, all are full of thee ;
“ Thine is the bloom that decks the flower,
“ And thine the fruit that bends the tree.

“ As much creative goodness charms
“ In these low shrubs that humbly creep,
“ As in the oak, whose giant arms,
“ Wave o'er the high romantic steep.

“ The bower, the shade, retir'd, serene,
“ The grateful heart may most affect,
“ Here God in ev'ry leaf is seen,
“ And man has leisure to reflect.”

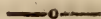
So he has, as much as the duties, or perhaps rather the attractions of society will allow him. No, the best reflection is on his pillow, or at least “in his chamber;” there are no objects but what are within himself.



DCCCCLV.

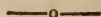
IN the retributions awarded to the actions of men here on earth, Providence seems to leave them to their natural operations and consequences, except when particular visitations are called for, as appears to have been the

case in a late fatal duel, I think in Newfoundland, where the greatest and most brutal provocation had been given by him who fell in it ; this indeed may have been the case of a madman, (but whose was "the madness of the heart") who was merely taken out of the world, because he was not fit to live in it ; the next we cannot penetrate into.



DCCCCLVI.

A CANDID and judicious man will take both sides of a question, will weigh and compare them both, and will carry his reasoning farther back than to what may be suggested by the separate view of either of them ; and how otherwise can the deep and complicated state of human affairs be explained ?



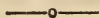
DCCCCLVII.

IF the actions of a truly liberal man correspond with his opinions, he must be an "honest man," in the widest sense of Pope's appellation, for he will be just to others as he is to himself ; and he will look forward with hope to the realization of the pictures which his "mind's eye" represents to him.



DCCCCLVIII.

NOTHING does a man more credit in discussion than to shew himself candid and reasonable at the same time. His statements, if they are not an exact representation of the truth, are at least that of its best features, and are such as you wish to see realized in the characters of others as well as his own. The friend whose conversation I remarked this in, a short time since, will take this as a tribute due to himself. Go thou, reader, and do likewise.



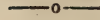
DCCCCLIX.

MEN's incredulity I believe often arises from the narrowness of their mental vision.



DCCCCLX.

"A MAN may smile and smile, and be a villain," certainly ; but will not even his smiles, if well observed, betray him? Is not truth to be known by her own image?



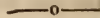
DCCCCLXI.

WE are apt to judge of men by the treatment we have met from them ; but if ill, have we not often drawn it upon ourselves ? If we flatter ourselves, it must be at their expence.



DCCCCLXII.

IF men were to cease to exist after having collected all the stores of knowledge which the world produces, and treasured them up for the use of posterity, the only reward for their labours that could be assigned to them, would be in our adopting the absurd supposition, that those who came after them, to exist also for a little while, were a continuance of themselves.*



DCCCCLXIII.

THOSE who attempt to reconcile God and Mammon, may well feel the pangs of remorse and fear ; but those even who attempt to reconcile the pure evidences of God,† with their own imperfect knowledge and condition, must also have their anxieties, soothed however with the hope of divine mercy and assistance.

* So they perhaps are, in what they have gained ; but their benefactors may hope for something more for themselves, if otherwise entitled to it.

† In the Scriptures.



DCCCCLXIV.

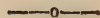
IGNORANCE may be a fair excuse for doubt, but it must be an ignorance far greater than what we can pretend to be left under.



DCCCCLXV.

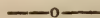
PROCRASTINATION is (as Young observes,) so strong a propensity in our nature, that I can see no other means of correcting it, but by giving, if it were possible, a retrogress, instead of a progress, to time, and changing the resolution, (or re-resolution, if Young pleases) to begin a thing to-morrow, to the fact (for *factum* it will then be) of having actually begun it yesterday. By this *modus agendi*, (in which we might be assisted by our neighbours across the western channel) the happy effect would be produced of making procrastination (then become retroheri-tination) the benefactor, instead of “the thief of time;” and every thing being changed, the source of human actions would be changed also (*et nos mutaremur*) and what is now reproach would become approach; reprobation, approbation, &c. Whether all this can be brought about I will not pretend to determine; but if men cannot thus be cheated into expedition instead of delay, I much fear that the case must be considered as desperate, and that we must go on procrastinating, “year after year, till all are fled.”*

* Excuse this “flight of fancy,” Reader.



DCCCCLXVI.

IT is not always easy to draw the line between assurance and impudence, though their etymologies might help us in making the distinction. Assurance may beget the confidence in which it is founded, but impudence never can, agreeable as it may be under a mask, but when barefaced, producing nothing but fear or disgust. It may be corrigible when proceeding from want of discretion, but never when from want of feeling; and only is tolerable, when associated, as is hinted above, with Hypocrisy, thus being amalgamated into a double poison.



DCCCCLXVII.

IF all men were reduced to one level, there would be no model for others to imitate, or to improve themselves by; the general level would be the lowest that could be found, for men would be glad to save themselves the trouble of improvement, when they had none to compare themselves with, for comparison requires difference of degrees, from the positive to the superlative; the comparative being the medium by which the others are measured, better or worse than those below, or those above us; all therefore cannot be the best, none can be better, and what remains but the very worst; for even good is comparative with those below it: better supposes worse, worse

supposes better: good is the opposite of bad, and an exemption from it, as "optimus ille qui minimis (vitiis) urgetur!"



DCCCLXVIII.

THE thoughts of the mind are the only broken chain whose links can replace themselves.

You have called your's "Night Thoughts," Young; but they must have been your Morning Thoughts too.



DCCCLXIX.

WHAT we cannot have positive proof of, we may have nearly as strong in negative, such as is that of the immortality of the Soul; but what an addition to this are the promises of the Scriptures!



DCCCLXX.

THE doubts of sceptical men, as they begin from the narrow basis of their own knowledge and opinion (mixed with a tolerable share of self-conceit) so they generally end in a reference to themselves and their own concerns, to which they turn as to a diversion from the difficulties into which an inscrutable subject has led them.

DCCCCLXXI.

ONE cause of doubt may be in indolence, which will not allow us to take the trouble of an examination, and forces us into rejection, in order to excuse ourselves; another more pardonable may be the desire of further satisfaction, which we might probably obtain by our own endeavours. A certain degree of self-satisfaction we cannot help attaining or assuming, and the pain of doubt arises from the sense of the importance of the subject, and the consciousness that if any thing is worth our care during this short-lived existence, it must be what is to come after it.

DCCCCLXXII.

I SUSPECT that the dislike which some have to metaphysical abstractions, arises from their fear of being led by them into finer and more subtle examinations than the grossness of their own conceptions would bear; the sensualist may well dislike sentiment, and the immoral man the purity of unbodied spirit, but does not this lead to the rejection of all religious meditation? Does it not bind us down to earth, answering Horace's description,

——“affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.”

No, the particle of divine air that animates the material part of rational man, will mount aloft, and will aspire

to regions more congenial with her feelings: Frederic of Prussia, and other Deists, who only believe in the existence of a God because they must, may totally separate him from his creatures, and leave him nothing to do, but to enjoy his own existence, and may conclude that because they feel nothing but the impulses of their own earthly appetites, we have none that will survive the grave; having nothing of the God within them, they cannot assimilate* any of their ideas of him whose images they have ceased to be: they may indeed have sometimes a feeling of awe, and even of love,† but the one is unmixed with future hope, the other unrefined by aspirations to better objects than those which attract them here: here they grovel, and here they will sink into the depths to which they gravitate: even their fellow creatures, the horse, the dog, &c. are informed with better feelings, though theirs have a reference only to their existence here; they go no farther than to shew to man that there are beings under him which depend upon and look up to him, as he does to those above him, on whom he depends, and to whom he aspires.

—o—

DCCCCLXXIII.

“WHAT can we reason but from what we know,” the Deist may say; but surely we know enough to reason

* To their own feelings.

† Not divine.

to what we do not know ; else how are we to believe in a God ?

DCCCCLXXIV.

WHAT is it (I believe I have asked this question before) that constitutes what is generally called " a clear head ?"

DCCCCLXXV.

A CLEAR head and deep reasoning, ought to (perhaps must) go together ; without the first, the second cannot be attained ; without clearness, both of the subject and the discussion of it, we can see the bottom of nothing ; and even when our sight is interrupted by the depth of the medium between it and its object, a beautiful blue light will present itself, that tells us something still more luminous is beyond.*

DCCCCLXXVI.

DESCRIPTIONS the least flattering often require the correcting hand of truth, for the describer will embellish, if not for the sake of the object he describes, at least to

* So we speak of a clear sky.

recommend his own descriptions, and to justify the admiration which drew it from him ; so that self-love and social flattery here unite, and vanity has a double tribute paid to her. If the describer is influenced by a contrary motive, he will either be silent, or by a single sentence he will “damn with faint praise.” Here vanity and spleen divide the tribute between them. The eye of criticism will see through both these impostures, and will exemplify the “magna est veritas, et prævalebit.”



DCCCCLXXVII.

MEN's wants are the same (i. e. their material ones) at all times ; the means they take of supplying those wants will, a peu de choses pres, be the same also. Let the antiquarian apply this to his enquiries into the differences of usages, utensils, &c.*



DCCCCLXXVIII.

MEN's minds in general are not equal to reasoning on an enlarged scale, but it is the only solid ground of reasoning, as human affairs themselves are extensive in their combinations, beyond the power of reason to analyze ; and such an undertaking would perhaps be like an intellectual Tower of Babel, and would produce a

* Still however they are *Antiquities*.

confusion of opinions, as the building of that did a confusion of tongues. To lift or remove a heavy mass (and what are more so than prejudices?) will require an union of forces, which time only can accumulate; when the removal becomes more necessary, or less difficult, what men will do must depend more or less on what they think they can do, and some of it on what other feelings may dispose them to do.

—o—

DCCCCLXXIX.

THE present style of singing and playing is a display of power with which we find ourselves astonished, and fancy ourselves pleased, pleased with what in fact we are hurried out of all power or time to attend to. A simpler style, with more expression, (for which distinctness and articulation are required) is less surprising, but much more interesting. It were to be wished that singers and players would exert themselves, not to show what they can do, but how much they can make their hearers feel.* The “modesty of Nature,” may be “overstepped” in singing, as well as in acting. But I can speak only for myself.

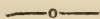
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DCCCCLXXX.

I think we want no other proof of the confusion produced in our minds by the business or no business of the

* To do this (of a pun may be allowed) they must submit to being a little *dis-graced*. Their “graces” indeed go almost “beyond the reach of Art.” Poor Nature is quite out of the question.

day, than we may have in observing the state of them when we awake in the morning, free as they then are (I speak to those who think) to attend to any particular subject that may occur to them. How much then is required at other times to force that attention to subjects that are abstracted from the more engaging occupations of the world, or the enjoyments of the senses! Ah misfortune, what a share must thou have in forcing it! and what a school is adversity! For this are individuals, for this are nations visited. And what are those lessons for? Merely a preparation for extinction of thought? Oh! no.



DCCCCLXXXI.

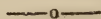
How amply do increasing years repay what they take from us, by the increasing powers and habits of reflection which they give to us!



DCCCCLXXXII.

A SENSE of Religion is necessary to give a "heart and substance to the joys" of life, which their shortness and uncertainty will not otherwise allow them to have. What joys can exceed those of gratitude for blessings received? All must be dispensed, nothing can come by chance, for chance itself is nothing: all is a chain of causes and effects, which must originate in a First Cause, whose

decrees are founded in that wisdom which alone can give them the force of necessity ; for choice must be regulated, otherwise it would be caprice. The greater our joys are, the more they require a dependence, which cannot be placed on themselves, for they are fleeting and changeable ; that dependence then must be on the power and the will of Him who dispenses them, and who can substitute others and better for any that He may deprive us of ; from Him we have our being, from Him we have all things that we enjoy.



DCCCCLXXXIII.

Confessing our sins is certainly a means of obtaining the forgiveness of a “ faithful and just ” God ; but this should be accompanied with a desire and endeavour to “ cleanse ourselves ” from them. The desire of bodily cleanliness arises from that of recommending ourselves to our fellow-creatures ; how much more then should the desire of recommending ourselves to God make us wish for mental cleanliness ! While we have a spot upon us, we must be sensible of it ; can we not wash it out ? If ashamed to appear before men, must we not be ashamed to appear before our Maker ? and can we hide this shame by endeavouring to forget that He is within us ? If we are to “ work our way to salvation ” (and some work our minds will force us to) we cannot safely sit idle, much

less direct our endeavours to improper objects, which we must do if we do not direct them to proper ones, for idle entirely we cannot sit. The beginning of those endeavours is in the desire of obtaining the object of them, which, if sincere, God will improve into active efforts, for this desire, like the “*dirus hydrops*,” but very opposite in its effects, “*crescit indulgens sibi*.”

—o—

DCCCCLXXXIV.

PRIDE is often owing to a false calculation of the means of recommending ourselves to others.

—o—

DCCCCLXXXV.

MEN are on their guard against each other, because they are apt to take improper liberties; women are more free with each other, because their natural timidity and delicacy restrain them from doing so. With men, almost every idea may have an indecent association; with women no such ideas occur, or if they do, they are immediately suppressed.* If they are so in men, it

* It will be easily perceived that this alludes to women who do not disgrace their sex.

must be from a higher regard than what their habits or even their education, exposed as they are to ill examples, would secure in them. The Turks undervalue women, because they know not how to do them justice in the comparison, and by so doing they sink themselves into mere sensualists: if we did so, we should want the best softeners of our own rugged nature, the greatest excitements to the manly character, and the nearest assimilation that we can make to that of an angel: when its purity is soiled, it is generally the hand of man that does it.

—o—

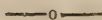
DCCCCLXXXVI.

MEN of very elevated minds seem to float between earth and heaven, like the suspension of Mahomet's tomb (which we may conclude every "Hadgi" has seen) between two loadstones, with this difference, that the first is an affair of the imagination, the second, if we may believe the Turks, a matter of fact. What difference a full stomach, so favorable to animal courage, may make, is hard to say, but we must suppose it has the effect "*affigere humo*," till the "*divinæ particula auræ*" is again released by the mechanical process of digestion. Fuseli indeed is said to have stuffed himself (though probably not to repletion) with high meats, to excite his pictorial powers during sleep, but I should think it would only make him dream of the Devil, or produce his earthly similitude the Night

Mare, as indeed we may judge from the monstrous extravagance of Fuseli's figures. For my part, humble aspirant as I am, I should rather fear the depression, than expect the elevation of my dilucular suggestions by following Mr. Fuseli's practice, especially as the head ach is known to be the usual concomitant of an overloaded stomach. As to the conveyance of absolute knowledge, it seems of little moment what regimen we follow during life, if according to Pope,

“Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die;”

which is a happy equalisation of characters, and very consolatory to the recollection of a mis-spent life, though a little contradictory to the instances he gives (especially “Helluo's”) of the continuance of the ruling passions till our dissolution. Perhaps the poet's mind, like the suspension of Mahomet's tomb, might have an oscillation between earth and heaven, which in its glancings “might beget many heterogeneous associations, equally consistent with heated imaginations and impeded digestions: heterogeneous in the latter sense they must be, for the “idea of a crowd” (as Archdeacon Paley humorously called it at college) upon a table, would hardly produce crowded ideas in its deglutitious realizations, or at least would interfere with their arrangements upon paper. Those who wish to avoid the inconveniences above mentioned, must at least have recourse to the expedient of occasional abstinence, to preserve them from the ill consequences of the excessive indulgence of a good appetite, and to give them the possession of “*Mens sana in corpore sano.*”



DCCCCLXXXVII.

WHEN we say of another, that he is a superior Man, we probably mean, that his ideas are superior to those which our minds suggest to us: but how much of this imagined superiority may depend on habit, or even on accident, we cannot say.



DCCCCLXXXVIII.

THE powers given to the different orders of animals in the creation, may be estimated by the final causes visible in them, and again those final causes may be judged of by the nature and magnitude of those powers; reasoning in such a circle must surely be founded in truth.



DCCCCLXXXIX.

Is it the pride of mankind that makes them overlook common sense in their reasonings? or do they see it merely through the medium of the former? Ambition is apt to lose sight of what gave it its first impulse.

DCCCCXC.

CAN a proud man be a sensible one ?

DCCCCXCI.

MANY men are imperfectly, none perhaps are thoroughly, known to their fellow creatures ; all are known to God : how surely then will the judgment he performs be different from that of any earthly tribunal.

DCCCCXCII.

IT is an unfortunate circumstance, that many who have given proofs of their public spirit, have betrayed a less worthy motive for it, in getting themselves raised (if it may so called) to the Peerage. Is it because they think their possession of this quality a meritorious service done to their country, which deserves to be so rewarded ? If so, every man who possesses it ought to be made a Peer, and where then are we to look for the standard of honesty in independence ? If a man is engaged in public life, and has talents for it, he may find some reason for chusing a seat in

one house rather than the other, if he takes care to occupy it afterwards ; but if he confines himself to private life, I cannot see why he should be made a Peer, unless he thinks he cannot be a gentleman without it. But the fact is, that those who obtain this elevation, are generally possessed of large fortunes, (as they must have something more than their own worth to support it) and we must then consider this puerile vanity as one of the “ Mala,” of which wealth is an “ irritamentum.”*

—o—

DCCCCXCIH.

IT is greatly to be lamented, that any instances should occur in this country of the commission of a crime of the worst kind, and the most disgraceful to human nature. Notwithstanding the detestation with which it is justly regarded, every well-wisher to society must be anxious† that this detestation may be kept up, and that those who have thus blasted all their prospects in this world, may be left to make their peace as well as they can with the next.

* I hope the reader will not consider this as meant to depreciate the house of Peers itself, but rather the contrary. In my estimation of the members of which it ought to be composed, an hereditary Peer, or one who has earned that elevation, may very well be an honest independent man, and in every sense a Gentleman.

† An anxiety which every fresh instance of the commission of this crime must keep alive.

—o—

DCCCCXCIV.

IT is a dangerous or rather desperate state of manners (may it never be ours!) when the prevalence of vice prevents the effect of any censure of it; such a “defendit numerus” is terrible indeed! In our country we may find much encouragement in the efforts to plead the cause of good morals which the press is continually pouring forth, and in its endeavours to direct our views to better objects; we cannot suppose that a merciful Providence has allowed those merely to shew their inefficacy: let us therefore hope that the advocates of virtue will finally triumph over the enemies which they have to encounter.

—o—

DCCCCXCV.

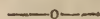
WE need not expect to hear or see any audible or visible signs of the favor of Providence to virtue or of its hatred of vice, we have only to attend to the “still small voice” within ourselves.

—o—

DCCCCXCVI.

DOMESTIC felicity cannot well be the lot of Princes, as their own inclinations are seldom if ever consulted

in the choice of their partners ; and even the political considerations (sometimes accompanied with those of relative connexion) which direct that choice, are often unaccompanied with those enquiries which subsequent events prove to have been necessary to justify the choice, and to ensure the national benefit which was, or should have been, intended by it. An exception to the circumstance first mentioned has occurred in the instance of our late Sovereign ; an exception as rare perhaps as the goodness of his character (which after all is the best greatness) was pre-eminent among those of his, or indeed of any rank. In some respects the influence of his example has survived the grave.



DCCCCXCVII.

EPICURISM is not to be judged of by the single circumstance of its making pleasure the great end of our views in life, but by the means it proposes to arrive at that end ; true it is, that it considers the practice of virtue (or at least the avoidance of vice) as necessary for this, (and therefore the admirers of Epicurism give it credit for being founded in truth,) but it separates our views from all regard to the agency of God, as exercised towards man ; it excites neither love nor fear of Him ; and it narrows all our interest and regards to those of this present life, at the same time flattering our vanity and our indolence by the powers

it supposes in us of answering those interests and regards : it leaves the action of only one quality to a creature who is composed of many. Epicurus committed a capital error in his system ; he forgot that the desire of pleasing God is essential to the enjoyment of pleasure by his rational creatures, as their reliance on his mercy is to the alleviation of pain ; neither of which can take place, if he has no regard to man.

Those who admire Epicurism in theory, I think must find themselves a little disappointed with it in practice.



DCCCCXCVIII.

IN a popular old song,* there are these two lines, being the “*eloge funebre*” which the Author wished to be made upon him after his decease,

“ In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow,
“ He’s gone, and has not left behind him his fellow.”

This is not very unlike the sentiment of Mrs. Diana Trapes, in her song in the *Beggar’s Opera*,

“ The life of all mortals in kissing should pass,
“ Lip to lip while we’re young, then the lip to the glass.”

Such are the aspirations, or inspirations if you will, which Epicurism offers to its votaries.—But these were not the virtuous enjoyments of Epicurus.—No, but are they

* Beginning with

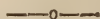
“ If I live to grow old, for I find I go down.”

not the probable consequences of making *Pleasure* the great object of life? *Voluptatem sequi* will not always be “*vitium fugere*.” Akenside indeed says,

“ O pleasure ! we blaspheme not thee,
 “ Nor emulate the rigid knee
 “ Which bends but at the stoic throne.”

But in this he means to blame both the extremes.

Epicurus's error seems to have been in wishing to direct instead of counteracting, our impulses : but if there is evil in the heart of man, must it not be counteracted? And it will,—for alas ! the “ priest of pleasure ” cannot absolve us from the penance of pain.*



DCCCCXCIX.

I KNOW not whether a severer critic might altogether approve of the mixture of imagination with the semblance of truth which there is in the tale or union of “ the Cave of the Enchantress,” by the fascinating author of “ *Gaieties*

* The reader will not suppose that I mean to put these enjoyments (of “ kissing ” and “ mellowing ”) on a par ; but he will allow that there is something of the spirit of Epicurism in both. Epicurus himself indeed was not a *debauché*, but his followers may be so, for verbal restrictions and explanations are no security against the excesses to which a system opens the door : the observance of those preventives will depend much on the discretion of the individuals, in many of whom the spirit will be too strong for the letter.

and Gravites." Admire however we must, and as any censure might endanger our being suspected of envy, we will only admire and be silent. I cannot however help breaking this silence (as mental struggles are apt to be loquacious) by the expression of some fear, lest I should be put under the painful alternative of mixing my admiration with censure, (excessive as perhaps is the display of his creative, or at least combinative powers,) or of confessing my inability to admire without any such alloy; admire however I repeat that we must at any rate, and we may reserve our fruition for the moments when our spirits and our attentions are equal to it; for even in relaxation we may make "a toil of a pleasure," unless we follow the *bent* of our humours.

— o —

M.

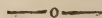
WE may sometimes impute want of feeling to persons whose feelings we cannot bring forth, not knowing how to address ourselves to them; as an unskilful player cannot bring harmonious sounds out of an instrument the most capable of producing them. Harmony or discord may, as Shakespeare makes Hamlet observe, be brought out of the same instrument; those only can produce harmony who are capable of feeling it, and of "governing the ventages;" a man of feeling and talent can no more be expected to display them before those who cannot do them justice, than he can be to "cast pearls before

swine ;” if he did, instead of admiration and sympathy, he would only perhaps excite stupid astonishment, or what is worse, envy and malignant passions.



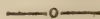
MI.

THE pride of this world is apt, in various ways, to make men lose sight of the common interest which they have in the other.



MII.

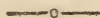
WHAT is more delightful than the calm expanse of a summer sky, with the general enjoyment of it in which we participate with all around us, while the mind is left to the full employment of its own powers, and the sensations which the aspect of nature so strongly excites ? Is not this an anticipation of a future state ?



MIII.

I BELIEVE the materialists have overlooked an argument greatly in their favor, in the dispute concerning matter and spirit, as their chief object is to exclude the existence, in order to destroy the importance of the latter, which indeed is no longer necessary, for even admitting the existence of spirit, to the entire exclusion of matter, the question itself is of no consequence, for where there is no matter,

there can be nothing material. . This will set the minds of the Anti-spiritualists perfectly at ease, and it will afford a noble, indeed a boundless field for Scepticism to range in, though I fear with little chance of finding game; for do away matter and spirit ("time and space" perhaps need not be "annihilated") and nothing remains (unless indeed we embody that nothing, and give it wings, &c.) for us to doubt of: still however, I am puzzled how to reconcile this "vacuum" with the "plenum" that universal doubtfulness must necessarily create; "chaos" must "come again," to settle the matter.*



MIV.

THE numerous and indiscriminate society of the present day is very adverse to real demonstrations of friendship, for it cannot be expected that where there is a total want of congeniality, there should be any sympathy, it is only by selecting our friends that we can hope to give or receive sincere offers of friendship; unless when a superior feeling of christian charity supersedes all others, and friends and enemies are alike comprehended in the same general extension of love; and even then, it is more a love of duty than of inclination, that can give no utterance to the lips, and perhaps but an imperfect feeling to the heart: the love of our enemies, and even of those, who are

* This "flight of fancy" too requires an apology.

indifferent to us, is best shewn in occasional demonstrations of good will, and constant repression of all malevolence.



MV.

As man was made in the image of his Creator, so all the human dispositions and feelings (I mean those of sentiment) approach to the divine : to be convinced of this, we need only attend to the effect that music has upon us, especially serious, and above all, sacred music ; indeed in all the arts, the effect, to please, must be on the mind, through the medium of the senses ; and do not we say, that there is mind, or sentiment, in such a piece of music or painting ; or, what is peculiarly addressed to it, poetry ; and even this may often be more addressed to the ear, than to the mind ; or if to the latter, to the lighter qualities of it. In all the arts, in nature herself, harmony is most required, and also is more peculiarly adapted to musical sounds ; it has the strongest effect upon our feelings, it is expressed by the organ that also expresses all our affections, it is alluded to in the strongest manner when we speak of the praise and adoration addressed to God himself ; it is the mode in which the coming of the great day of judgment is to be announced ; and the existence and agency of beings most remote from matter is expressed by a term (spirit) that implies an action that can only be perceived by us in its effect upon material substances, as leaves, &c.

because our senses are yet too gross to be affected by itself in the abstract (an abstract which perhaps may as well be made of it, as of spirit from matter :) as Shakespeare says,

“ While this muddy vesture of decay
 “ Doth close us in, we cannot hear it.”

—o—

MVI.

OUR opinions on abstruse subjects, particularly religion, seem to be so influenced by the peculiar propensities of our minds, that it is impossible for us to examine and compare them accurately at the bar of reason, unless we knew more of the theory of the human mind than it is possible for us to do. Perhaps I should say that the knowledge required is that of the subject itself; but arguments may satisfy one man, at least by his own profession, which will not fully satisfy another who may be equally disposed to wish and believe in the truth of christianity: whence then arises this difference? If the satisfied man gives reason for his satisfaction we can examine them (provided they are intelligible) and judge whether they are sufficient or not; but if he professes to have received new lights, &c. how are we to understand him? Is it not rather an acknowledgment that his reason has not power to give him that satisfaction that he professes to receive from these new sources? And how can he explain these? How can he prove

that we ought to receive them as well as him? Or how can he establish his better claim to them? Reason he cannot appeal to for his justification, for he has appealed to a higher power, and has disclaimed that faculty which alone, humanly speaking, can enable him to judge of the satisfaction he professes to have received; that faculty to which our Saviour himself appealed for the reception of his doctrines. It seems to result from all this, that we can only judge for ourselves, imperfect as that judgment must be, and also, that we should not adduce any arguments in favor of our own opinion, that are more likely to alienate than to gain over the opinions of those to whom we address them; that we should confine ourselves to those that are likely to gain over the greatest number, if we can calculate upon this; and above all, that we should be in charity with those who may differ from us.

MVII.

It appears to me, that the chief means we have in maintaining ourselves in the belief of truth, is by keeping up a continual warfare with falsehood; so that the mind can never be thoroughly at rest (which indeed is incompatible with progressive enquiry;) if it was, it would sink into indifference, or something worse.

MVIII.

IT must be acknowledged, that the Greek and Latin names of the objects of natural history, give a dignity to them, independent of any display of erudition, that prevents their being confounded with the subjects of familiar discourse, and places them in a kind of mental repository, where they have an effect correspondent to what they exhibit on the shelves of a Museum. It seems that nature, in dispersing them over her vast field, has given to each class of them its separate and connecting qualities, subdivided again into specific distinctions, that the human mind might arrange them accordingly, and agreeably to what its own constitution requires, in the association of ideas, which it is so prone to form. What a theme would this be for the Author of "Gaieties and Gravities" to indulge his sportive vein upon!

MIX.

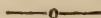
THE deifications of Pagan Mythology seem at first to have arisen from simple feelings and ideas, suggested by as simple facts: as these became multiplied and diversified, they were embodied (for men had not yet learned to abstract) in forms such as the objects of them were on earth. Hence the mixture of qualities in Jupiter, Apollo, &c; so Olympus and Parnassus are localised in the mountains

of the country, where those personifications were made. I am obliged for this suggestion to the author of the book I have in my hand, with the playful and excursive vagaries of whose "Gaieties and Gravities," I can no more compare my own sober and plodding "Ideas and Realities," than the circular trotter of a riding-house can be matched with a New-Market racer, or a Leicestershire hunter.



MX.

I SHALL express a trite sentiment, but a real feeling, when I say that the more we exercise our own minds, and in a right pursuit, the greater satisfaction we shall enjoy, with the greater ability to endure changes and reverses. The best mental repose is in mental occupation, for total *desœuvrement* is impossible.*



MXI.

PERFECT satisfaction cannot be attained in this life; an unsatisfied mind is of course in a state of solicitude; a satisfied one (especially if it is so from self-persuasion) may, and will if it reflects, have that satisfaction clouded by the apprehension that it has been purchased at too easy a rate. We should then be cautious in forming our conclusions.

* At least for any time, and to minds that are capable of action.

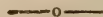
MXII.

POPE's and Young's descriptions of Hope, as preventing our enjoyments of any present blessings,* and as being "the assassin of our joys," as "treading them under foot," and being "scarce a milder tyrant than despair," may be exaggerated, but as it is the nature of hope to impel us to look forward to a continuance and increase of our present enjoyment, it necessarily implies a dissatisfaction, or at least an imperfect satisfaction with them. That continuance and increase are both uncertain, and therefore hope itself is an insufficient supplier of the defects of enjoyment, and "turns us over to death," for that "ease" which we so often sigh for. Does it not necessarily require a reliance on some power who can insure them to us? And is not even that reliance in some degree weakened by the sense of our own unworthiness? All these defects may be partly supplied by that buoyancy of animal spirits, that, like the effervescence of Champagne, supplies the want of body, of "heart and substance" (much better given by religious meditations) and balances at least, if it does not exclude that sensibility† which makes us "turn at the touch of joy or woe, but turning tremble too;" that sensibility with

* "Man never is, but always to be blest."—*Essay on Man*.

† Sympathy and compassion, the accompaniments of sensibility, are the literal expressions of suffering; what then were the feelings which Milton ascribes to the Angels, and which "mixed with pity, violated not their bliss?"

which I have just been contemplating the gleams of a rising sun through the grey clouds of a summer's morning, with a pleasure unalloyed even by the sight of the game-keeper returning with his gun in his hand from the slaughter of a deer; a sight which, with its associations, would perhaps have suggested to the facetious author of "Gaities and Gravities" a further increase of pleasure and alleviation of pain, in the enjoyments which the "Memoirs of a haunch of Venison" would enarrate;* for, used in moderation, and accompanied with social communication, heightened too by the "rich ichor, the generous blood of Bacchus" (though I must confess I like beer better) the enjoyments of sense are themselves an auxiliary to those of the mind; but let us guard against their excess.



MXIII.

I WOULD suggest to the ingenious punster whom I have been reading, that the superiority of short candles over long in giving light, is clearly demonstrated by the necessary double application of the term "candle's ends;" though indeed in preferring them, we should have the pleasure of "burning a candle at both ends."† The same view of things will prove that we live here to no purpose; for what but nothing can the *world's end* be? unless in-

* See "Gaities and Gravities."

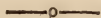
† The farrago of this flight of fancy may perhaps be excused as the suggestion of a moment when sleep with its attendant dreams, was hardly shaken off.

deed there is no vacuum. Happy too will it be for the men of this world, if Life is not the "means," but the "end;" we may then burn both the Bible and Young's Night Thoughts, for where is the use of reading them backwards, as the Magicians did by the Lord's prayer, when they invoked the Devil?*



MXIV.

The policy and the interest of this world, will sometimes induce people to exhibit the appearance and even the substance of virtues, that ought to be suggested by higher and better motives. This must be what Shakespeare means by "assume a virtue, if you have it not." Thus the "charity which begins at home" supplies the place of that which "stirs abroad:" a good example is set or at least imitated, and virtue gains followers, if not adherents; can this be "cutting her throat," hypocritical as such "homage" may be? Can we cut virtue's throat while we are holding up her train?



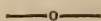
MXV.

SOME people pay their debts to mankind by running in debt to the Devil. (Thanks again to the author of "Gaieties and Gravities.") The "Friars" way of getting rid of Satan by acknowledging his debt to him, was

* See "Gaieties and Gravities."

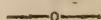
The vagaries of this Work are very seductive; whither will they lead us?

indeed an ingenious one :* what would the " Prince of darkness" have done, if neither his debtors nor his paymasters, were " troubled" by him? But would it not be better still, if we could make him debtor to us? So indeed he is, if we do his work; and we need not doubt of his repayment—in another world: he will give us " aurum potabile," there, we shall be auro " satiati, quod semper cupivimus." We shall gain a further advantage, if both the cause and effect of our evil actions are to be attributed to one agent, as in the case of " Bias and the Bowls," and " Eusebius and the Spectacles;" for it will relieve us of all the guilt, by throwing it on Satan, who will then have four shoulders to bear it, and will indeed become the " Diable a quatre:" but in that case, how shall we have earned his aurum potabile?



MXVI.

SOME people multiply words faster than ideas: society multiplies ideas faster than words; for how many ideas are often expressed in one word?



MXVII.

IT would be well if pride (whatever idea it is to convey) always " saved us from falling:" for it generally prevents

* See " Gaieties and Gravities."

us from rising again, by making us ashamed of penitence, by which alone we can rise when fallen. Pride in fact knocks us down and keeps us there.

—o—

MXVIII.

WHEN we lose a promising child, we feel all the grief that the loss of present enjoyment, and future hope can give, but we should ask ourselves whether we could have seen the object of it in a light that could throw a greater brightness over those hopes, or that could have done more than shew an approach towards that perfection in another state, for which this earthly school, in its best and latest ages, is but a preparation; a state in which that hope, or rather the fulfillment of it, will be mixed with no fears of uncertain duration, or future disappointment. If he has shewn any qualities superior to his age, what were they but anticipations of that prime of life, that maturity of improvement, from which the transition might have been made without any intermediate decay; and how much greater will the joy of our recovery of him be hereafter, than any we can feel in recovering a favorite whom we have lost for a short time here; and what a certitude of this does our reliance on the justice and goodness of our Creator, and on his fidelity to the promises he has made, present to us.

—o—

MXIX.

FAR from quarrelling with ourselves for being swayed by motives of interest, we ought to be thankful to our

Creator for having so closely connected our interest with our duty; the more we attend to the latter, the more we shall consult the former, the more we shall gain the esteem and confidence of our fellow-creatures; and if we also deserve their love by our amiable qualities, we shall be incited to a return of that love, which will lead us to the love of Him, whose demand of it is equal to what he bears to his creatures, and what he has shewn and declared through Him who gave his life in demonstration of it.



MXV.

THERE are three kinds of writings, the insipid, the affected, and the decisive; the insipid is when the style and expression are weakened and perplexed, with little meaning and less decision; the affected, when a conceited arrogance is covered by a pretended modesty, with a pompous diction and often a studied obscurity, and when a fancied knowledge is substituted for real ignorance; the decisive, when a well grounded confidence is shewn, not so much in the writer's own power, as in a thorough conviction of the truth of what is asserted, and clearly explained. If he appears to lay down the law, he does it from a certitude of its being founded in justice; if he advances an opinion, it is with a modest appeal to the unperverted, unsophisticated sense and feelings of mankind, whether he addresses himself to his reader's feelings, reason, or imagination, whether he has a "Chilvers,"

a "Clinch," or a "Harrison" to describe, or a "new Royal Literary Society" to address,* &c. he is equally clear impressive, amusing and appropriate.

—o—

MX XI.

QUERY (*quærerere enim licet, si locus hic est desipere*) is the incolastic derivative (as Dr. Johnson, or the Author of "*Gaieties and Gravities*" might call it) from *Iberia* (Spain), *Iber*, or *Iberus*? The similar, and similarly applied term *Ligur*, may be a grammatico-legal precedent (such as Scaliger himself might allow) for the curtification (I prefer this word to curtailment, as every cur has not a short tail) of the other; and there is an additional sanction for it, in the affinity, what the *Ligurians* and *Iberians* bear to each other, in being "*animis elati superbis*." This question I respectfully submit to the "New Royal Literary Society."

—o—

MX XII.

INGENUITY or erudition (which some cavillers call pedantry) will sometimes be a substitute for accuracy of judgment and correctness of taste, in the alterations proposed by critics, whether *variorum* or not. † The

* See *Gaieties and Gravities*. vol. iii.

† It is to be observed, that those critics are doubly entitled to their literary fame, with a literal addition to it, as they deal so much in letters.

Right Reverend Commentator on Shakespeare, might claim one or both of these merits, though it is to be feared, that the author of the "Canons of Criticism," would enter a formidable protest against allowing him any other merit than that of a conceited and dogmatical pedant.*

—o—

MXIII.

MAKING the heads of an intended composition the *mems.* of it, is something like a member of parliament putting his heads in his hat while he speaks, in which case, perhaps, it may be doubted, whether the heads in the hat, or that out of it are the fullest or emptiest of matter. Could the nucleus of this capital integument be dissected, as Prior's Alma proposes, it would afford a mighty assistance to the science of Craniology, which might then be able to trace the bumps (organs I mean) to their sources, and to see in its utmost state of compression or incipient evolution, the passion whose powerful and sometimes uncompressible expansion produces such beneficial or maleficial effects upon its owner, or on those who are within its influence. This might also enable the followers of craniology to become masters of the composition of the various passions, and to make factitious ones, which every individual might carry in his pocket, like detonating powder, and thus would possess the means of being master of himself and his impulses. What new System of Ethics this would give occasion for, I leave to the professors of moral philosophy to determine.

* Be this however said with due deference to the Author of "The Divine Legation of Moses."

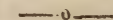
MXXIV.

ONE of the great requisites in singing or saying, seems to be a good intonation, which includes or rather implies expression, and necessitates articulation, without which singing (excepting the beauties which peculiarly belong to melody, and certain affinities between sound and sense, and also, the various *giochi di gola*) would be little better than an Irish howl, which indeed has also its peculiar expression (*honus erit huic quoque*) heightened by the seasoning of the brogue.

MXXV.

MELODY seems now to be little more regarded than as a means of shewing off the voice, by gracing and running divisions, with chromatic turns and forced inflexions, and a drawling and affected kind of expression to please the high and low vulgar; making sudden, and we may suppose agreeably surprising bursts and transitions from piano to forte, and vice versa; in all which, articulation is lost (which indeed may save the trouble of "suited the words to the music well") and often *time* too, for it gives a kind of *ad libitum* to the singer, thereby preventing the impertinent interference of instrumental accompaniments, &c. Much the same may be said of instrumental execution, excepting that the voice is not the leader; and indeed it is hard to say in which of the Arts (for sisters may cor-

rupt one another) the present style is the more vitiated and meretricious. Even Handel's music is made subservient to it, and is treated as the Lady in the Spectator, (No. 226) treated the psalms in a country church, to the utter astonishment and confusion of the congregation. This however is counteracted by a few returns to nature, simplicity and truth.



MXXVI.

How much more is required to beget confidence between people of the higher ranks of society, than those of the lower! The first are made nicer by their mental acquirements and their pride of rank, and have more to lose, both in their credit and their worldly interests. Simple honesty is the only recommendation required by the lower ranks. Even here then we see how different are the objects of the two worlds, how inferior one is to the other, and how much more man, worldly man, requires than his Maker. Man indeed knows that "where much is given, much only is required;" but he does not seem to think, that where "little is given," that little is worth requiring: he values only the "much" that he mistakenly considers as such; nay, he sometimes requires much where little has been given.* If he accepts the "widow's mite," it is because he has the example presented to him, to make do what his own nature would not have suggested to him;

* My own insufficient attention to this caution I can only excuse by the difficulty there sometimes is of distinguishing between want of ability and want of exertion. To the latter however, the parable of the "Mote and the Beam" may be applied.

so powerful is the Mammon of this world, and so much stronger are our passions than our reason.

MXXVII.

O AUTUMN, is not thy temperature given purposely to tell the feeling mind what it may expect, and what is better told, from the highest Authority, that it has to expect.

The calm of Autumn is a holy calm,
 That, like itself, breathes peace into the soul;
 And, as it breathes, gives the foretaste of heaven.
 The voice of Nature is the voice of God,
 That "speaks in things still louder than in words,"
 And speaks to every sense; nor less we feel
 Its animating power, with icy touch
 When Age has laid his chilling, withering hand,
 On all but on the mind; this springs aloft
 With high desires and ardent hopes inflamed,
 And wonders at the body's slow decay.

Sept. 1826.

MXXVIII.

PERHAPS it is not one of the least miracles of our nature, that with the powers and the ambitious desires of our minds, we do not work ourselves into a kind of frenzy, in contemplating the innumerable stars that illuminate the vault over our heads, and in fact all around us, to we

know not what extent. If this astonishing exhibition was carried still farther, the fable of Jupiter and Semele would probably be realized, in the effect it would have upon us. But while we are permitted safely and humbly to wonder and adore, how are we to conceive the future enjoyments, of which our present are but an anticipation? Every building that we raise, religious ones particularly, is a sort of Tower of Babel, pointing upwards to that region to which our minds aspire, and to which our astronomical observations carry them. The humble cottage on the contrary, is an emblem of the unambitious adoration that we pay to the exalted Power who rules over us. As Semele raised her desires too high, so may the astronomer, borne aloft by his deistical aspirations, lose sight of "the High Priest," who has "entered into the holy place," and whose mediating arm alone can enable us to ascend whither he has gone before us.

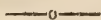


MXIX.

REASON cannot reach to the intelligence of a future state, but it may to the expectation of it; the deficiency then must be made up, as far as it can, by feeling: and how well does this justify the reproach of our being "slow in heart to believe!" In how many shapes will this most interesting of all truths offer itself to our minds!

Reason can chuse between two propositions, and can see what would be the result of her rejecting either of them; but here she stops; she cannot perceive the full

force of that which she adopts, unless it is impressed on the feelings; what she has not power to reach, is to her almost as if it did not exist; any proof she can have of it, must only be in her taking the negative side of the question, in the consequences that would follow her adoption of the opposite proposition; this however leaves room for her judging of the comprehensible evidence which urges her reception of truths that she cannot comprehend.



MXXX.

I SHOULD look upon it as one of the greatest profanations of Heaven's best gifts to man, if I could believe that the Author of "Gaieties and Gravities" has not really the feelings which he so pathetically describes in his story of "the old white hat and old grey mare," &c. with the proper accompaniments of those feelings; but it is impossible; he must have them, in spite of any cold or sceptical philosophy, or thoughtless though ingenious and amusing levity; he must have them, and they must influence his opinion and his conduct.

His chapter upon Noses, proves I think, that we may fairly count *his* among the friends of a good cause, and that the rest of his senses are as sound as that which he has so well descanted upon. So able an advocate for a clear nose must have a clear head; the feature itself we may presume is a well formed one, as he has shown so good a nose for a joke: it is probably

a medium between the long protuberance of Slawkenbergius,* and the flattened perforation on the face of the wife of Genghiz Khan: at any rate his head must be longer than his nose, and all together must form an excellent sun dial, and whatever hour of the day the gnomon points to, we may be sure to find him collecting materials in his common place book for the future amusement and edification of his readers, who cannot refuse to be led by the nose by one who handles his pen so well; they may therefore safely follow their own noses wherever he leads them, and can never wish to stop them at any odour which he may present to them, nor need he fear being addressed with

“Ocyus exi,

Jam graves nobis, et scæpe emungeris; exi

Ocyus, et propra “—————” being certain that a pinch of his snuff far exceeds the “titillating dust” which he dissuades us from taking. May his nose then be the leader of ours; may the gnomon and the dial shew his nose on the Theatre of the world, when our unsatiated appetites for instruction and amusement excite us to make the call in which boxes, pit, and galleries will unanimously join.

I cannot however leave his volumes without hoping to see a recantation of his “Pleasant Illusions” to atone for the injustice he has done to truth: I say injustice, for a misrepresentation of truth is a dereliction of it. But I hope he has rather deceived himself,

* I am almost afraid to refer the reader to “Tristram Shandy” for this.

than wished to deceive his readers, and that he has been more inconsistent than insincere ; either however is reprehensible.*



MXXXI.

THE philosopher laughs at every body but himself ; and this his pride will not allow him to do. The old philosophers, in deference to the prejudices of mankind, worshipped God, not through, but in his creatures ; if they rose higher than this in their closets, it was to worship another creature, that of their own suggestions. Philosophy is the display of human knowledge ; its business therefore is to instruct ; if, possessed with the sense of its office, it carries its enquiries into matters on which it is unable to form any certain conclusions, it either considers them as doubtful, or else it throws a shade of doubt over them by the unsatisfactory attempts it makes, with all the magisterial tone which it assumes, to account for them ; and its scholars also consider them as doubtful, resting their confidence on the master who has undertaken to instruct them ; if they neither did this, nor acquiesced in his reasonings, they would cease to consider him as the object of their reverence, and they would be thrown back upon the earlier lessons of their childhood ; and what else remains for those who are

* Have I attached too much importance to "Gaieties and Gravities" in the beginning of this Article ? I think not.

disappointed in their expectations of acquiring knowledge? I should presume that it is upon that ground that we are enjoined to receive instruction "as children;" for what else but humility befits the confession of ignorance? What right has it to form conclusions, or rather to carry those conclusions beyond what the common sense of mankind enables them to do? The philosopher however will not submit to this, unwilling as he is to humble himself to a level with the lowest of his scholars, and to give up his title to a superiority over them; but the common ills of life will force him to do it, and to have recourse to his feelings to seek for that knowledge which his reason could not enable him to attain; who then will deny that adversity is the best of schools?

"Si quid novisti rectius istis,

Candidus imperti."——I will not add "sinon his utere mecum," till my reader allows me to do so.*

—0—

MXXXII.

WE are continually making involuntary confessions of our ignorance; "what do I know," "que sçais-je," "che so Io," is ever in our mouths, but how little of it is in our hearts!

* This Article, I fear, is somewhat *farraginous*; however, I think it is *inter consideranda*.

—o—

MXXXIII.

MIGHT not a compromise be made between the Calvinist and the advocate for liberty, by admitting that man is not a free agent in the acquisition of his mental powers, but only in the use he makes of them? God foresees that use, no doubt; but prescience is not predestination.

—o—

MXXXIV.

WITHOUT the different ranks in society, there would not be the same incentives to courtesy and humility, which even our pride is made conducive to the observance of. This habit will induce sympathy with our fellow-creatures, which will supply the place of a more confidential intercourse: thus the policy of a world becomes its own corrective.

Such observations as these will perhaps appear trite and obvious, because they are nothing more than the *expositions raisonnées* of general practice; but will not our habits, when reflected on, be converted into principles?

—o—

MXXXV.

IT is not so much with the reality of human passions, as with the mode in which they are exhibited, especially

when it is directed against ourselves, that we find fault ; if we make the case our own, we may find that we should exhibit the same, whether pride, envy, &c. though perhaps in another manner, and in an inferior degree. Against all this the only preservative is religion.

—o—

MXXXVI.

AMONG the other merits of human vanity, may be reckoned its being a preservative from envy : for a man who is vain of his own accomplishments can hardly envy those of others : nay more, it is a friend to compassion ; for will not a man pity others who are not as accomplished as himself ? Enough, if he says he pities them ; for who will not give him credit,* both for his mental powers and his feelings !

—o—

MXXXVII.

CENSURE, and even Calumny have their use, in inciting us to do all in our power to exempt ourselves from them.

—o—

MXXXVIII.

“ SIC vos non vobis ” may be applied to all whose thoughts are not wholly engrossed by self ; and even the self-conceited Coxcomb may have the merit of giving

* The same, no doubt, as this Article deserves for its sincerity.

amusement or admonition, in usum or in terrorem, to those who see him. N. B. no bad excuse for our making fools or sinners of ourselves: but it would be better if it did not revert upon us.



MXXXIX.

“VERBUM sentiendi,” may be said as well as “sapienti;” for what cannot thought do for itself? We have only to put the stone in motion.



MXL.

WE may flatter ourselves, without being content with ourselves; a smooth surface may be inviting, but not safe to tread upon.



MXLI.

UPON my word, my good friends, who dislike this desultory way of writing, your thoughts must be very domestic, or their circle very small. Is it Penelope’s web that you are weaving, or is your mental labour like that of the tread-mill, or of the squirrel in its rolling cage? ’Tis something however, if you are “ever ascending:” but for my own part, I wish to get “higher,” though I have little hope of being at the top of the tree. I shall find nuts, however, and crack them, if it is but for a joke. Won’t you catch them, if I throw them to you?

 MXLII.

How is the gloom of a winter's night cheered with the warmth of a fire within, and the brightness of a full moon without!

When all that nature, all that Art can bring,
To Winter gives the comforts of the Spring;
And every star that shines above our heads
On Man's enlivened heart its mildest influence sheds.

Decr. 1826.

 MXLIII.

DOES Horace make up for, or does he aggravate the blame that may be thrown upon him, for the indulgence of a nasty idea, by the strength of his representations and expressions? Is 'it not a sad abuse of his "*curiosa felicitas*?" But are we not more angry with Juvenal than with him, for the very reason that we should not, viz. because the one does it in indignation, the other in a sort of playfulness, "*Ridendo dicere*" *foedum*?

"*Nec lusisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum,*"

The gravest may, and will† smile at a witty but licentious idea, but they must not dwell upon it; for after all, it is slippery ground to stand upon. And as to the "*incidere*

* I hope this Article will meet with no severer censure than its levity deserves. Perhaps that may be sufficient to rank it *inter tollenda*.

† "*Si videbitur.*"

ludum," why, perhaps before we can do this, we may already have made an incision in our own fingers. Who would handle a sharp plaything, to make a bad hand of it after all? Buck-skin gloves will hardly secure us.



MXLIV.

IF we consider the diversity of intellect to be so great as not to admit of any two being exactly the same, (as in leaves, &c.) the problem of two lines approaching one another and never meeting, will be true in morals, as well as in mathematics, and "good wits" may "jump," without jumping into the same hole. But does not this exclude some part of the essential properties of intellect, as the problem does of matter?*

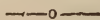


MXLV.

THE varying and multiplying our thoughts is a sort of security against a too great attachment to any one object, so as to make it our hobby-horse, and to excuse our excessive pursuits of it, by our observance or avoidance of others; and besides, a variety of cogitations, as they are more or less connected with, may also be a corrective of each other; such as the love of money and the love of pleasure; a little coxcomitry, and an equal share of mo-

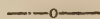
* *Anne inter leviora, vel obscuriora?*

desty ; a hot overbearing temper, and a serious disposition ; with other still more important cases : in short, “*insanire omnes.*”——and this is an antidote to those *manix*.



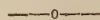
MXLVI.

WHEN we speak of the “*Nature of things,*” we mean, or we ought to mean, as it has pleased God to constitute them.



MXLVII.

MY dear good world, for so I will consider you, what a pleasing thing it is to converse with you in this manner ! For I think I can anticipate your answers from your closets, or your viva voce conversations with each other ; and of course my vanity anticipates favorable ones addressed to me, or to my book. What an irritative this is to the *cacoethes scribendi* !



MXLVIII.

IT is a lamentable thing, that the follies and vanities of this world should retain their hold upon us, till we are

upon the point of quitting them for ever. It seems as if we could not exist in this world without them ; but what shall we do with them in the next ?*

— o —

MXLIX.

HORACE'S Satire "Hoc erat in votis, &c." may I think be reckoned among the

Carmina subridens quæ scripsit Horatius, in se
 Alternaque vice in chartas sua lumina vertens,
 Nec minus, "ingenti Musarum impulsus amore
 "Sæpe caput scaberit, vivosque eroderit unguēs."

— o —

ML.

If it was left to a man to form his own creed, (which would hardly then be called *Faith*,) he would soon be tired of it, because he never could satisfy himself; he would wish to break the chains he had bound himself in, and give a full loose to his imagination, which loves to soar beyond its own reach; and what is it but that, which christianity imposes upon us in the doctrine of the Trinity? † The simple belief of an Almighty and Infinite Being, is indeed

* Perhaps we may leave them as a legacy to those who come after us. At any rate, the sooner we get quit of these *exuviae*, the better.

† I mean, as being beyond the reach of our imaginations.

far beyond our comprehension, and yet, as the proposition itself is a simple one, and has* no other authority but the suggestion of our reason, we should want an object of still more difficult attainment (at least more apparently difficult) to exercise our powers upon, along with an incentive to our belief of it, of still higher authority than any that our reason can suggest to us; that object we find in the Trinity, and the authority for it in the creed that imposes the belief of it upon us.† If we had not that belief enjoined us, we should probably substitute some other (as has been done by unenlightened nations,) which would not only be difficult, but absurd, which the boldest infidel will not venture to say of the Trinity, however it may be above the reach of his comprehension; if he does, he will narrow his belief of things incomprehensible, within the limits by which the mere evidence of his senses is bounded, and he will probably end in disbelieving the existence of God himself, as being more than that evidence can inform him of, and as being the sole conclusion of his reason, exposed as it is to the influence of all his passions, and unassisted by any authority that can secure him against them. He has already rejected that assistance, and may soon find what a "broken reed" his reason is without it.

* Or rather, would have no other if that alone was trusted to.

† When I argue thus in favor of a belief in the Trinity, I mean that it is consonant with our reason; consonant, not with its ability to comprehend the object itself, but the evidence which vouches for its truth. This cannot be said of other doctrines imposed by the Church of Rome.

—o—

MLI.

SUPERIOR powers of mind have so little attraction in them, that they must have a cloak thrown over them, to prevent their being repulsive. They are like coin, which requires to have its standard lowered, to give it currency; or like a magnet, which would lose its attractive powers if it was not constantly covered with the baser metal which it attracts; by this means it communicates some of its virtue to the latter.

—o—

MLII.

I HAVE ventured in defiance of the Hexairasthenic and Hypnoferous effects of this very synthermantic Weather (N. B. Thermom. 78. July 8th, 1826, 1 h. P. M. Wd. S. S. E. Sole occulto, nubibus cumulo stratis, &c. (armed as I shall be for Hypnomachy with the koniartic and egeirolastic powers of his wit; I have ventured I say to amuse and recreate myself with the vigintinarian anticipations of I hope the alethoepic and pandunamic (or panoramic, if you please,)* autographs of real septuagenarianism

* The reader may, if he pleases, add anthroporamic, or autoramic, (with or without a glass) or any other amic to which he may be amicably disposed.

I know not what apology is to be made for this "vagary," unless it is the attempt to follow, pedibus titubantibus, the steps of my "gay and grave" leader; to put on a bold face, and say, "Nil desperandum, Teucro duce et auspice Teucra."

by the very entertaining author of "Gaieties and Gravities;" and I hope also that I have not tolmerically and thrasutically availed myself of the nomothetic assumptions of this criticratical age, in judging his work, which, eudæmonic, therapeutic, and pantodapical as it is, has little to fear from the aikistic though authekastic scuthropisms of any acribodicaism whatever.

—o—

MLIII.

We are unwilling to believe any thing that we cannot fully comprehend, whatever evidence there may be for the truth of it. Not so, says the Deist; I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible. Very well, Mr. Deist; but is it *Faith* that has impressed this belief upon you? and can you justly expect to be left to the mere suggestions and conclusions of your reason? what would *that* have informed you of, if other information had not been given you? and with what has that information been accompanied? But you would pick and chuse for yourself; and so you may, and ought, if you make a fair use of your reason in the choice: but take care that you follow no other guide, even in the satisfaction that you may feel in your own conclusions: Γνωθὶ σεαυτὸν.

—o—

MLIV.

SOME people, estimating religion by the moral observances of its professors, rather than by its own inculcation

of them, fancy that they see a superiority in the Mahometan, or even in the Hindoo, to the Christian; but they forget, that on this ground, as well as on all others, the latter is far superior; for in what religion is morality so well inculcated, however little it may be observed, as in the Christian? *



MLV.

THE forms of some of the Constellations, particularly of Orion, and the tail of the great Bear, the Pleiades, and perhaps the Galaxy, &c. are so remarkable, that one can hardly help supposing that they are relative to the observation of man, and their effects upon him. † The objects of the Earth which he inhabits seem more decidedly so; if the former may have that application to him given them, it must probably be in common with the rest of the sentient beings in the Universe.

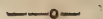
July 9th. 1826.

—————“jamque tenebat

Nox medium cæli spatium.”—————

* And will these “estimators” require a miraculous enforcement of practice, to give authority to the inculcation of it? Let them judge by the *voluntary* performance of its precepts.

† What regards the planets, I think progressively leads to this supposition, as well as to the conclusion that the science of Astronomy is universal. Other ideas might be suggested respecting the progress of it, &c. but the imagination must not take too great a range.



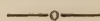
MLVI.

How often does the awe that we “stand in” of each other, supply the place of that better awe that we ought to have of ourselves and our Creator! As to the latter, we seem to imagine, that want of thought is want of (i. e. exempts us from) responsibility. But all our “communications” with each other in this life, are of little value, if they have not a reference, directly or indirectly, to the life to come.



MLVII.

OUR estimation of what is due to ourselves, sometimes makes us overlook, or at least undervalue, what is due to others. This is the “charity,” that not only begins at home, but “seldom stirs abroad.”



MLVIII.

MR. Such-a-one has never been married.—Yes, but he has though. He has been married, or at least wedded, all his life, to his own humours; and they have made as great a slave of him, as any wife could.



MLIX.

WANT of candour seems to be allowed to mankind, when it is necessary to pass a severe sentence, in order to deter others from committing the same fault.



MLX.

OUR self-love induces us to recommend ourselves to society, and the means we take of doing it may be considered as a compliment paid to the self-love of others; thus an exchange is made, which in a degree at least, produces the same effects that a pure "good will towards men" would: but I am afraid that these effects are not always shewn in our remarks upon others: what is the remedy for this? Self distrust, which indeed is the genuine offspring of self-knowledge.



MLXI.

OUR opinion of others should be guided by an abstract love of rectitude, or rather by our regard for the source of that, and of all good; but we should be cautious how we "judge *His* servants."

MLXII.

"I JUDGE not myself."—No, St. Paul, but your recollections must have consoled and encouraged you—and *what* recollections ! It could be in no unconfiding spirit that you added, "He that judgeth me, is the Lord."

MLXIII.

How many points of convenience may be answered by a man's making statements (which the various ways of understanding a thing may often oblige him to do) that nobody on earth can understand but himself; but all these will be worse than lost, if he makes improper ones; when his private statements are only preparatory to his public exposition of them the first are for himself, the second for those to whom his account will be rendered. So it is in the business of this world, and so it will be in the much greater business of the next, where all our hieroglyphics will be fully understood.

MLXIV.

If we consider the objects of our worldly attachments according to the value they have in themselves, we may well exclaim with the Poet,

"O curas hominum ! O quantum est in rebus inane !"

But if we regard them as being connected (as they all are more or less) with a future life, they acquire a real importance, and this life is no longer the "jest" that Gay chose to call it. Every object, the employment of every passing moment in it, gives occasion for the exercise of that "patience and resignation," which Young justly calls,

—————"the pillars

"Of human peace on earth ;"

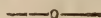
pillars whose bases are upon a rock, and whose summits are in the skies.

—o—

MLXV.

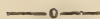
THE mystery of our redemption we are totally unable to conceive ; but the sacrifice made by Christ of himself surely calls for our highest veneration and gratitude. Were we to admit the possibility of error in our considering him as making a part of the Supreme Being, the Triune God, (a mystery far beyond our comprehension,) it would still be an error on the right side ; for I feel, that the person who said, " I am the Resurrection and the Life,"—" My Father is in me, and I in him,"—" Before Abraham was, I am,"—with other passages of like import—the person, who, to prove his possession of divine power, said to those who doubted it, " That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy) Arise, take up thy bed and walk," which was immediately done—and all these events are so authenticated as to leave no reasonable doubt of their truth ;—to such a

person, I feel that I can only prostrate myself in humble submission, adoration, praise, and gratitude. At the awful end of his mission, consonant as it was with, and the consummation of all that preceded it, well might the skies be darkened, and the elements disturbed; and well might the Centurion who witnessed these events, say, "Truly this man was the Son of God."



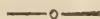
MLXVI.

I KNOW not whether what I have said in the preceding Article, as well as in others on the same subject, will satisfy all my readers, as indeed there are some enthusiasts whom I do not expect, and hardly wish to satisfy. They I believe would not allow with me that reason and common sense, in concurrence with right feeling, and with all the assistance which they are capable of receiving, will be sufficient for the consideration of that subject, or of any thing connected with it. Any "new lights," however that may be pretended to, or even believed in by their asserters, cannot, I think, unless authorised by the faculties above mentioned, have a fair claim to our belief in the reality of their reception. Encouraged by these sentiments, I should not hesitate to form and declare my creed, or my opinion of those already formed; trusting in the divine mercy for the reception, and in the good sense of every reasonable member of the Church of England for the approbation of it.



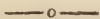
MLXVII.

THE Deist's idea of the Supreme Being seems to be, that he is too great to be good: the Unitarian limits his goodness, as the Deist excludes it. Is there a reasonable humility in either?*



MLXVIII.

OUR sympathy with others is in some degree obstructed by our regard for ourselves, and still more perhaps by a higher reference. This is expressed by "Every man for himself, and God for us all." We must not however forget our duty to our neighbour.



MLXIX.

WITHOUT altogether relinquishing the "post of honour," or that of utility, I think a man may sometimes be allowed to seek the post of *quiet* in a "private station." Therefore

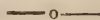
"Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico"

&c.——(see No. 849)

The "potens" should of course include all the ability required for it. After all, however, the "Metiri se

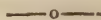
* See the Appendix.

quemque suo modulo ac pede" is not always an easy task. How much both of moral and physical go to make up the whole of our agency.*



MLXX.

AMONG the millions of millions of sentient beings that perhaps inhabit the universe, every one preserves his individuality, and his power of communication, by prayer and praise with his Creator: it is so now, and why should it not be so, increase as that multitude may,† through all eternity? This communication, with the practice that results from it, ought to satisfy each individual; but alas, the range of his mind and the impulse of his feelings, if not of his passions, are too great for his powers, and perhaps for his duties.



MLXXI.

THOSE who do not like detached thoughts, must either dislike thinking altogether, or be perfectly content with the thoughts that occur to them, or they must dislike

* The reader is at liberty, if he pleases, to consider this as the confession and plea (for seeking the post of quiet) of the Author, for which however he claims a right to expect that the sentence of his fellow-creatures shall not be a severe one. How far this book will atone for his not mixing more with "the busy hum of men," must be left, partly to the judgment of the reader; but how much of what has been "done, or left undone," must be determined upon by a far higher judge!

† By successive generations, and their removal to another state.

making any selections or extracts from the works of others ; for a common-place book must be formed in one of these ways ; and who has a right to be above common-place instruction ?



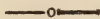
MLXXII.

WE are apt to judge of the rest of mankind, not so much by what we see in them, as by what we feel in ourselves. This perhaps may suit the “ Epitome,”* well enough.



MLXXIII.

WHAT is wanting in sincerity,† cannot be made up by mere courtesy. Let the great consider this.



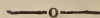
MLXXIV.

Look back upon life, how trifling‡ it is.—Look forward, how important !

* “ Every man is an Epitome of all mankind,” says the proverb.

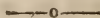
† We may sometimes be insincere to others, to cover our want of sincerity to ourselves.

‡ Trifling in itself, but not in its consequences ; and the more trifling the more we have to look back upon, and the more we are disposed to do it. To this however there are exceptions.



MLXXV.

It is essential to the justice and goodness of Providence, that all the ills of life shall be compensated ; and so they will, if we seek the proper resources. All will be "repaid."



MLXXVI.

PART OF THE HISTORY OF AN AUTHOR.

AFTER much thinking and much doubting, A. Z. found that the surest ground to form an opinion upon, especially in deep subjects, is by the proper estimation of our own knowledge and our powers of reasoning, not expecting more satisfaction than we are capable of receiving, and being sensible that the best knowledge we can attain to, is that of ourselves. In the course of his meditations, he began to write down his own thoughts, for his own use. Impressed with the above convictions, he wrote in newspapers and magazines. Encouraged by this, he fancied that he could write for the public, and accordingly he wrote a book, which was commended by the Monthly Review and the Gentleman's Magazine, but having been too much familiarised by gratuitous distributions among his friends, and also containing some injudicious insertions, was read

by few only, most people caring little for much thought, and preferring easy decisions, and above all, amusement.

Half dismayed and half encouraged by this, he wrote another, more varied, and rather more select, which ———



MLXXVII;

To what I have said in my first number, I think I might have added “*verbum sapienti*,” and this may be no bad conclusion to my book, though the reader may say that *nimia verba* would have been a better description of its contents. But it must speak for itself.



The Department of the Interior has been notified
that the following lands are to be reserved for
the use of the Department of the Interior and the
Bureau of Land Management.

The following lands are to be reserved for the
use of the Department of the Interior and the
Bureau of Land Management:

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APPENDIX.

Page 3. Note to No. 3.

The promises and assurances of the Gospel are certainly meant to counteract and quiet, in some degree at least, these mental disturbances; but still will not some of them remain? and does not "Help thou mine unbelief," express the state in which the mind is still left? The truth I believe is, that we are apt sometimes to mistake our endeavours for attainments, and to persuade ourselves that we are in that state of mind in which, agreeably to the sense of our duty, we wish to be; but this I think is making error the purchase of peace; for whose performance or attainment in "thought, word, and deed," can come up to the sense of his duty? If it did, we should no longer have any confession of our unworthiness to make.

Page 63. Note to "Understanding," in No. 168.

I mean in the productions of human genius.

Page 78. Note to "public mind," in No. 199.

I mean in exciting a comparison between the good and the bad, in which the former should at least be predominant, to give a satisfactory result. This will, to reasonable minds, afford sufficient "concurrence."

Page 79. Note to No. 202.

Need I say, that professional as well as other applications admit of exceptions?

Page 80, Line 16, Note to "pictures" in No 203.

Particularly a delightful Ascension of the Virgin, by Nicolo Poussin.

Page 88. Note to "admiration," end of No. 221.

The subjects of it which Nature affords are open to the great and unsophisticated, though simple and unlettered, mass of common people. How just is that dispensation!

Page 164. Note to No. 413, "downright immoralities."

To these the reader may add, profanations.

Page 234. Note to No. 572.

The beauty and splendid appearance of the Butterfly tribe probably was what induced Linnæus to give them the names of the Trojan and Grecian Heroes.

Page 240. Note to No. 585.

This is only meant to be directed against the offensive display of qualities as the preceding Number is of habits, which, under certain restrictions, may very well be allowed to be exhibited by the fair sex.

Page 355. Note to "increase and developement," end of No. 863.

And they will have it.

Page 369. Note to 898.

If this is true, all that is required is, that a proposition shall be fairly and clearly stated, for the consideration of the reader.

Page 374. Note to 912.

Perhaps I may have been too severe in this censure of Waltzes; but can the out-works of modesty be too strongly guarded? And are not *appearances* of consequence?

Page 410. Note to No. 986.

In this fanciful vagary, I find on recollection, that I have attributed to Pope a line which is to be found in the "Night Thoughts" of the more serious and no less severe Young.

Page 417. Note to No. 997.

The "error," that I have charged Epicurus with was perhaps only one of many that might be expected from unenlightened Heathens.

Page 424. Note to No. 1006.

Whatever objections may be made to this Article, it is to be hoped that they will be compensated by what it ends with.

Page 424. Note to No. 1007.

To this encouragement of Polemics (tempered by charity) may perhaps be added, that without them the mind would lose the chance "*ab hoste doceri.*"

Page 444, Note to "inferior degree" in No. 1035,

"*Immo alia, et fortasse minora;*" any thing but "*Egomet mi ignosco,*"

Page 445. Note to No. 1041.

I know not whether this piece of levity may be excused as being a supplement to the first Article in this book.

Page 448. Note to No. 1045.

I think we may find a meeting of these opposite qualities ; and what extremes will not meet in the human mind, where such opposite principles are to be found ?

Page 452. Note to No. 1052.

I know not whether the Note to this Article is a sufficient Apology for its whimsical string of Anglo-Grecisms, which perhaps may send a no better Grecian than I am, as often to his Lexicon as it did me.

Page 453. Note to No. 1055.

Wherever there is perception and intelligence, such objects as these must ensure admiration. May not we suppose that to be one object of their creation ? There is a sort of anachronism in the placing of this No. which should have been before No. 1027.

Page 455. Note to No. 1059.

Candour will go farther than lenity, at least the lenity of the law ; but candour may be carried, in practice at least, to a mischievous extreme ; it is only safe, when we leave all ultimate judgments to God.

Page 456. Note to No. 1062.

The utmost degree of self-knowledge seems, as I have said before, to be in self-distrust : Confidence is better placed in intention than in execution, for who can depend on himself for the unassisted power of that ?

Page 456. Note to No. 1063.

I mean by this, that in many cases a man may be supposed to understand himself better than he can make others understand him : but the full understanding must be reserved for the rendering of the great and last account.

Page 456. Note to No. 1066.

This I think will be allowed, if reason and common sense may judge of probabilities, and if we are not required to give credit to assertions that we cannot absolutely disprove.

Page 459. Note to No. 1067.

A confirmed Deist may almost be said to be an Atheist in feeling, if not in opinion.—A Unitarian is at least half a Deist.—Deism is one of the aberrations of the human mind, which will not follow the only sure guide it can have.

Page 459. Note to No. 1069.

The passage in Seneca (*Thgestes Tragædia Act II. ad finem*, is as follows :

Stet quicunque volet potens
 Aulæ culmine lubrico,
 Me dulcis saturet quies ;
 Obscuro positus loco
 Leni perfruar otio.
 Nullis nota Quiritibus
 Ætas per tacitum fluat ;
 Sic cum transierint mei
 Nullo cum strepitu dies,
 Plebeius moriar senex.
 Illi mors gravis incubat,
 Qui notus nimis omnibus
 Ignotus moritur sibi.

If this could be realised in practice, it would exemplify the

“ Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim.”

It would be only fit for Prior’s “ Sauntering Jack and idle Joan.”

Page 461. Note to No. 1093.

“Life has no value as an end, but means.” *Night Thoughts.*

I have noticed the near connection (to say the least) between words and things, of which I think we may see daily examples in the “strife of tongues,” and in the various kinds of oratory, discourse, and composition, and which this book also will probably exhibit. We may perhaps have a good deal of the mist of human science to wade through, to arrive at the sense of its imperfection, which however, our own reflections may impress us with. But the weight of a pretended science, though it may be buoyed up by assurance, and tricked out in words, will sometimes bear heavily upon those who have not real, or at least relative knowledge (enough for our own purposes, and those the most important) to support it. How often then will the confession of ignorance, even where still greater ignorance is to be combated, be the safest resource! But how seldom can we expect it, among so many pretenders, so many who “make themselves ready for battle,” and who are, with some distinctions, “*Et cantare pares, et respondere parati.*” Well is it, when the passions thus vent themselves in a war of words only. But my reader may have had enough of these: he will not however consider them all as Verba, “*et præterea nihil.*”

ERRATA.

PAGE.

- 1, line 12, for *and which must*, read *which must*.
- 2, line 24, for *or to allow*, read *and to allow*.
- 8, line 3, read *but then in his heart he is a Christian; his heart gives the Sceptic in his head the lie*.—Line 19, of No. 15, for, *fears and hopes*, read *hopes and fears*.
- 15, line 7, for *may be*, read *might be*.
- 16, line 3, for *limits*, read *links*.
- 18, line 10, for *our own improvement*, read, *our improvement*.
- 22, line 2, for *porportion*, read *proportion*.
- 38, line 13, for *shelter and sanction of religion*, read *shelter, sanction, and correction of religion*.
- 43, line 12, for *quarelling*, read *quarrelling*.
- 51, line 12, for *chrysippo et crantore*, read *Chrysippo et Crantore*.
- 55, line 20, for *prægravatuna*, read *prægravat una*.
- 61, line 6, for, *Syllam*, read, *Scyllam*.
- 77, line 23, for *inherences of the world*, read *inherences——of the world*.
- 80, for *CLXV*, read *CCLIII*.
- 83, line 16, for *escamotent*, read *escamotant*.
- 133, line 13, for *doubting*, read *doubling*.—Line 18, for *those*, read *these*.
- 138, line 13, for *Fortunam*, read *Naturam*.
- 140, line 45, for *disolves*, read *dissolves*.
- 152, line 14, after *folly*, read *or pride, or any, &c.*
- 159, line 5, for *thus*, read *this*.
- 165, line 17, *and not*: my printer has here made me say, what I neither meant, nor can think;

PAGE.

- for I know not what human conduct can be divested of all earthly responsibility; pray, reader, therefore read *if not*, instead of *and not*.
- 184, line 3, for *but when it*, read *when it*.
- 199, line 5, for *spia*, read *ipsa*.
- 201, line 4, for *Lælius*, read *Lælius*.
- 203, line 4, for *page 135*, read *page 132*.—Line 9, for *Lælius*, read *Lælius*.
- 205, line 21, for *Nullum*, read *Nullam*.
- 234, last line, for *senible*, read *sensible*.
- 242, line 19, for *apears*, read *appears*.
- 250, line 1, after *it*, dele the interrogation point.
- 274, line 21, for *affected*, read *effected*.
- 286, line 6, for *imitate*, read *irritate*.
- 289, line 20, for *positively too*, read *too positively*.
- 295, line 9, for *power*, read *powder*.
- 296, line 1, for *nobility*, read *humility*.
- 326, No. 797 should have been divided into two, at *follow*. No. 797, a beginning at *A man*, &c.
- 329, line 3, for *noset*, read *nos et*.
- 354, line 5, for *opposite*, read *apposite*.
- 365, line 4, for *trembles to*, read *trembles too*.
- 406, line, of the Note, for *of*, read *if*.
- 413, line 5, for *performs*, read *forms*.
- 418, line 7, of the Note, for *stong*, read *strong*.
- 433, line 12, for *what*, read *which*.
- 426, line 20, the reference here (†) to the Note below, should have been at the end of No. 1002,
- 436, lines 23 and 24, for *to make do*, read *to make him do*.
- 440, line 15, for *gravises*, read *gravis es*.
- 442, line 17, for *sinon*, read *si non*.
- 448, line 8, for *pleasing*, read *pleasant*.
- 431, line 11, for *ages*, read *stages*.



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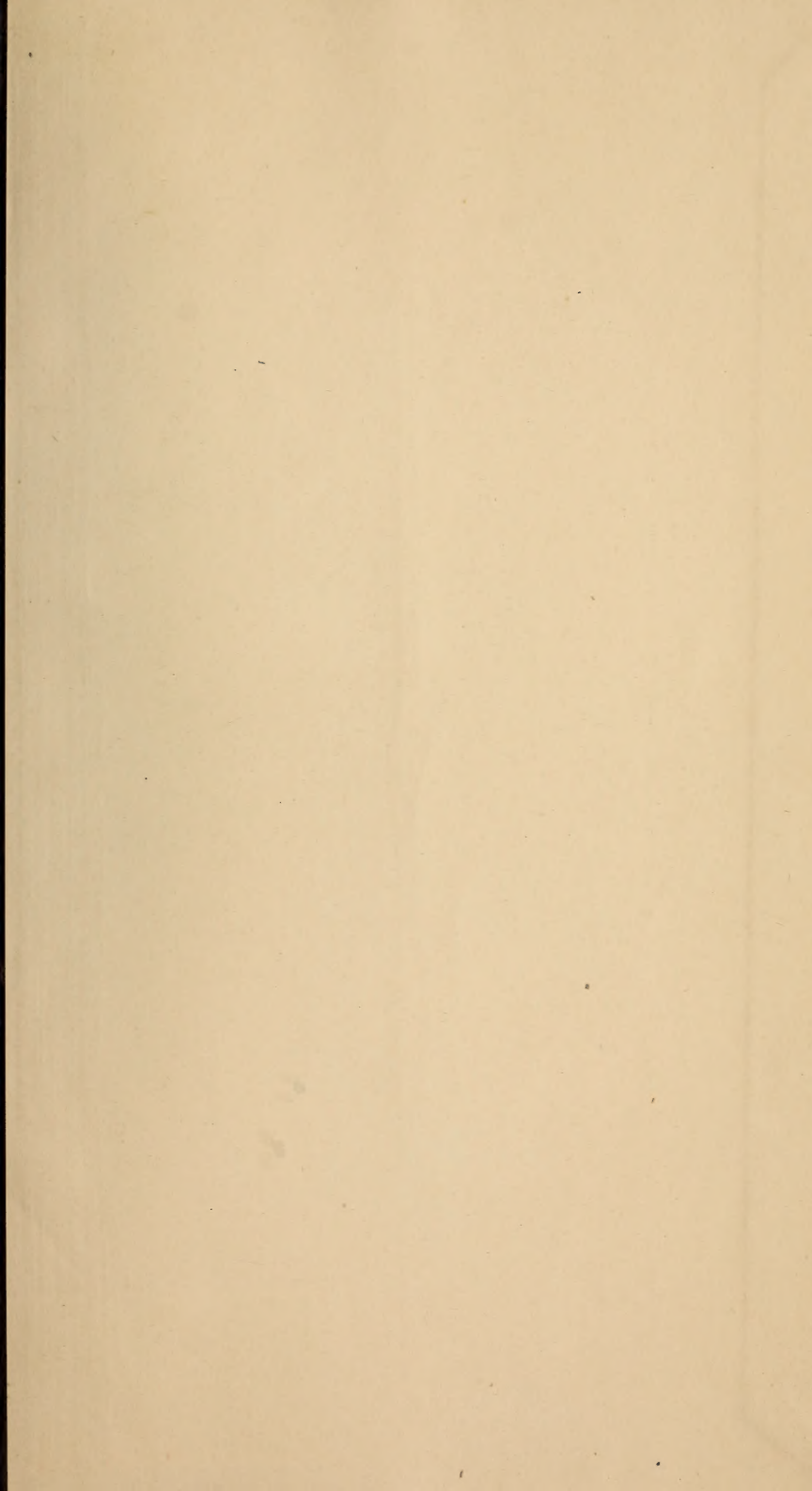
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